BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Outline of Thesis

CERTAIN PHASES OF IRONY IN GERMAN ROMANTIC LITERATURE

With a Comparison of Irony in Greek and English Literatures

by

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(A.B., Colby, 1923)

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

1933

H.E.L.

50304

I. INTRODUCTION

In modern civilized languages, as well as in Latin and Greek, the figure of speech of irony, as is popularly understood, consists in the speaker meaning the opposite of what he says. How familiar this figure was to Socrates, which is called after him 'Socratic irony', is well-known. Since then, from Plato and Aristotle on, the old philosophers, rhetoricians, grammarians and fine art critics have directed special attention to the explanation and understanding of this figure of speech.

We cannot identify the known double sense of the Greek Oracle sayings without irony. When the Oracle answered Croesus' question if he should march against Cyrus, the Oracle said that if he attacked the Persian King he would destroy a great empire. Croesus took it to mean that the Persian empire would fall, but instead of defeating the enemy, he destroyed his own kingdom.

The application of irony as a highly developed grammatical expression is an hypothesis. It is not so much with living speech, where facial expressions, stress and the use of gestures awaken and guide the understanding, but there, where, as on the Attic stage, the use of masks excludes that

support; or even more, in those writings intended exclusively for reading, that irony can be sure of its effect.

In the study of irony (Ironie) it is necessary to free the mind from any preconceived ideas and to keep it open for new ones. Probably no term has been so misunderstood or so variedly interpreted by critics and historians. In spite of the fact that the term is an indispensible one, it has never become a popular one. This may be due to the fact that, although it is exact in essence, it is composite in practice. It is rather difficult to give exact definitions, for irony has an emotional element which is so easily understood, that attention is diverted to the dramatic setting, and it escapes notice that a thing emotionally clear may be intellectually abstruse.

The term irony stands for a whole world of thought. It does have, to be sure, some of the meaning which is familiar to us all. But there have been other ideas which give it a different and rather complex meaning.

As is popularly conceived, irony implies an ignorance purposely affected to provoke

or confound an antagonist; or a sort of humor, ridicule, or light sarcasm, which adopts a mode of speech, the meaning of which is contrary to the sense of the words. This type was very much employed by Socrates against the Sophists. Later it was used by Burke in his "Defense of Natural Society".

Thus, for lack of analysis the word suffers abuse and we hear such qualifying terms as "the irony of fate", "dramatic irony" or "tragic irony", "Socratic irony" and "romantic irony" (and "prophetic irony"). It is necessary to have as clear a meaning as possible of these varied terms before we go into a detailed study of irony.

Turner says in his book "The Element of Irony in English Literature" that human experience is divided into three kinds; the irony of fate, which is so called because the perceiver of the irony possesses powers of correlating human affairs and of knowing the future beyond the capabilities of man; simple irony is that which one man speaks ironically to another and the second man, although he is conscious of being attacked does not perceive an exact double meaning; and lastly, dramatic irony, which is divided into several parts. Dramatic irony in its simplest form must have to do

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with people who are in no way connected. A, the onlooker, perceives B, the actor, doing something in a manner which is the result of ignorance on his part, of facts known to A. In a more complex form A speaks or acts towards B in such a way to convey to him a superficial meaning, but to C a fundamental meaning; and this becomes even more complex if A is a conscious perpetrator of irony or the tool of circumstance, or of some fourth person D. But one common factor unites these various forms of dramatic irony; there must be a disinterested third person. And here again can be interwoven another ironic force; if this third party is in no way responsible for the ironic forces, he bears witness to the irony of fate. We shall see later how this form plays such an important place in Greek tragedy.

In all of these situations, however, there is a force at work which is ironical. But as simple irony is the conscious product of the human mind, where one man ironizes another through the direct medium of speech, this type alone is peculiar to literature, for literature alone is exclusively concerned with the conveyance of thought in speech. Dramatic irony and the irony of fate may be produced by speech or action, hence are peculiar to the drama.

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The Socratic irony, as has been said, was the type used by Socrates to confound the Sophists. This was the procedure of inductive approach to generalization by question and answer; it was also called the dialogue method. The Sophists often made great pretence to wisdom and Socrates tried to refute them by showing them the absurdity of the position they attempted to maintain. When a teachable frame of mind was reached, a serious attempt was made to discover fundamental definitions, especially of ethical notions by means of inductive questioning. Even today this method is employed and regarded as an important element in any perfected procedure in learning.

Finally, romantic irony was a form used by a group of writers of the German romantic period, such as Schlegel, Tieck and others in which the aesthetic stand-point, which emphasized the artist's or critic's self-consciousness as the only reality and standard, was characterized. From this position of superiority the critic or artist regarded the world of so-called reality as futile and illusory. It is not necessary, however, to go into a study of Romantic Irony here, as there will be a detailed analysis of this later.

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II. IRONY IN GREEK LITERATURE

The study of irony leads us to the Greeks, with whom irony is said to have begun. It is essentially a Greek thing, perhaps the most differentiating thing about the Greek spirit.

The word irony is derived from the word "Eironeia". The word "Eiron", from which it comes, occurs first in Aristophanes. It implies one versed in every kind of trickery. Later Phileman contrasts it with "straightforward". A German writer, Ribbeck, says that irony comes into being, not through tragedy, but comedy and was probably introduced by Cratinus, a predecessor of Aristophanes, and that it meant "cunning", "sly", "wily".

Although Plato is in a sense the creator and supreme master of irony, he has nowhere discussed its full meaning or nature. Perhaps this is because in each new dialogue he gave a new extention to the meaning. In fact, in all Greek literature there is no adequate explanation of the word.

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The word "eiron" designates the "ironical man", a type evolved from the people. The primitive man is totally unscientific, yet he

has a certain logic of his own. He ascribes to the trees, rocks and fields the human feelings that he himself possesses. When he gradually discovers that these do not have human qualities, he grants them superhuman ones.

When he experiences a thunderstorm or some other terrifying form of nature he believes the elements are angry with him and he must appease them. With Caliban he says: "He hath a spite against me". He is beset by fear, as is often the case of the man who lives so closely to nature. But, although the Gods may be jealous, the primitive man has neither the power to reflect nor to define this fear. He has only one recourse, and that is, to dance. This gesture is to appease the Jealousy of the Heavens, and out of this grew both tragedy and comedy.

The comedy presents two characters: the Alazon, or Imposter, and the Eiron, or Ironical Man. The Alazon professes to be something more than he is and comes upon the stage lamenting and pretending, while the Eiron, who professes to be something less than he is, puts him to route.

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The fables of Aesop, which reflect the popular philosophy of life are saturated with

irony. These are apt to appear cynical, but are really comic. Now are they commonplace in the vulgar sense of the word. They are commonplace in that they treat of topics most familiar to men.

The plays of Aristophanes give us the first great development surviving to us of the humorous aspect of irony. Not irony in the modern sense, but irony withal. Aristophanes displays a conscious intellectual superiority to his puppets. He never identifies himself with any of his characters; he does put some of himself into them, of course, but not all. Some part of him watches them with a detached, amused interest--ironically.

The primitive man may fully believe that he lives encompassed by jealous powers watching him and that he should make himself very small and insignificant so as to escape the jealous eye. This thought recurs time and again in Greek tragedy. But man is born to rebel. Thus, man may defy the Gods or laugh at them. Here we have on the one hand the tragic view of life and on the other the comic. In tragedy the hero challenges destiny and falls; in comedy he challenges destiny, but the consequences are not serious. In

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The principle can only fully be-
lieve that he (they) approached by jealous powers
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small and inadequately so as to escape too jealous
by. This thought reminds him and again in dream
(vision). But man is today as rebel. Then, man
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either case the feeling is mixed with irony.

The "Sophoclean Irony" is traditional. The character utters words, the full significance of which is unknown to him, but is known to his hearers, who know the doom that is his. Greek tragedy is all ironical. The spectator knows what the outcome is to be, while the character does not. If there was any doubt the poet removed it by the Prologue. The dramatist must make every effort to place before his spectators the situation and outcome. The drama of today is full of the unexpected. The question is: "What will happen?". The question of the Greeks was: "When will it happen?".

A. Aeschylus

The "Agamemnon" of Aeschylus is typical. The interchange of shadow and light, known and unknown, bring out the irony. It will suffice our purpose to point out several instances where Aeschylus has driven home the irony of the situation.

After the plundering of Troy, Agamemnon returns from Troy to Argos. Clytemnestra, who has not forgiven him for the sacrifice of their daughter, Iphigeneia, has planned his murder. She receives him with feigned joy and invites him to des-

cend from the carriage and walk into the house over a quickly spread-out purple covering. Her greeting closes with the words:

"Let the whole road be straightway purple-strewn,
That Justice lead to home he looked not far.
All else my care, by slumber not subdued,
Will with God's help work out what fate decrees." [1]

These words convey one meaning to Agamemnon and another to the audience. Shortly after that the dialogue with her returned husband dies away into this prayer to Zeus:

"Ah, Zeus! the All-worker Zeus, work out for me
All that I pray for; let it be thy care
To look to what Thou purposest to work." [2]

This does not seem extraordinary to Agamemnon, but it discloses to the spectators a pernicious double meaning. Even the praises of the Chorus are sometimes mingled with traces of irony:

"And thou soon shalt know, enquiring,
Him who rightly, him who wrongly
Of thy citizens fulfilleth
Task of office for the city." [3]

These are only a few of the many examples which could be selected from the Agamemnon. The long ode by the Chorus is ironical. It is chanting the death-warrant of the King. The speech of

1) p. 216
2) p. 218
3) p. 212

cord from the carriage and walk into the house over a quickly spread-out purple covering. Her greeting closes with the words:

"Let the whole road be straightway purple-strewn.
That Danaïs lead to home no loosed lost Lad.
All alacrity gone, by glamour not subdued.
Will with God's help work out what fate decreed." 1

These words convey one meaning to Agamemnon and another to the audience. Shortly after that the dialogue with her returned husband dies away into idle prayer to Zeus:

"Ah, Zeus: the Ill-worker Zeus, work out for me
All that I pray for; let it be thy care
To look to what thou purposest to work." 2

This does not seem extraordinary to Agamemnon, but it discloses to the spectators a pernicious double meaning. Even the prelude of the chorus ends sometimes mingled with traces of irony:

"And thou soon shalt know, enquiring,
His who rightly, his who wrongly
Of thy citizens fulfilleth
Task of praise for the city." 3

There are only a few of the many examples which could be selected from the Agamemnon. The long ode of the chorus is ironical. It is chanting the death-warrant of the King. The speech of

1) v. 216
2) v. 982
3) v. 812

Clytemnestra, when she bids the Herald convey her message of welcome to Agamemnon is so full of concentrated and sinister irony that both Chorus and Herald are left speechless. In fact, her speeches throughout are filled with a sinister double meaning.

Finally Cassandra, left alone with the chorus gives utterance to a vision. Here Aeschylus makes use of Cassandra's gift of prophecy to let us see through her eyes the coming murder.

B. Sophocles

Closely allied with this are some of the passages of the "Electra" of Sophocles. Aegisthus, not suspecting that Clytemnestra lies murdered by Orestes, believes Electra when she tells him that Orestes had died and the messengers were inside with Clytemnestra. Electra intimates that they had brought along the body as proof and he, Aegisthus, could convince himself of it:

"Aegisthus: Have they in very truth pronounced his death?
Electra: Nay, no mere words, but proof, they bring.
Aegisthus: Can I then see it and be sure?
Electra: Thou canst indeed, and 'tis a sorry sight.
Aegisthus: In truth 'tis not thy way to give me such glad greeting.
Electra: Be glad then, if thou findest gladness here." [1]

1) p. 62

Clytemnestra, and she bids the herald convey her message of welcome to Agamemnon in an hymn of concentration and alliteration strongly that both Chorus and Herald are left amazed. In fact, her speeches throughout are filled with a similar double meaning.

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"Aegisthus: Have they in very truth dishonoured his death?
Electra: Yes, no mere words, but proof. They bring.
Aegisthus: Can I then see it and be sure?
Electra: Then enter indeed, and 'tis a sorry sight.
Aegisthus: In truth this not my way to give me such glad greeting.
Electra: Be glad then, if thou fancyest glad-ness here." 1

1) p. 68

At the command of Aegisthus the covered body is brought upon the stage, accompanied by Orestes, unknown to him. Aegisthus demands: "but call me Clytemnestra; if she chance to be within." [1]

How shattering is Orestes answer!

> "She is near thee; look no more for her elsewhere." [2]

But there is, perhaps, no play so filled with irony as his "Oedipus Rex". In this play the skill with which the truth is gradually revealed is beyond praise. It is the effect of these revelations on the characters in which consists the real power of the play. The mind of the spectator is thrilled with the tragic irony which Sophocles, stroke upon stroke, never ceases to enforce.

Oedipus has years before, unknowingly fulfilled the terrible condition which an Oracle has prophecied to him in his youth, as well as to his parents. After he has ruled for a long time in Thebes a pestilence breaks out. The Oracle, questioned, says the murderer of Laius is lurking unknown in the land and demands that he be punished. Oedipus swears to search for him without rest, put-

1) p. 63
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1) p. 65
2) p. 69

ting a heavy curse upon his head and adds:

"And, behold,
From them that aid me not, I pray no root
No seed in earth may bear them corn nor fruit,
No wife bear children, but this present curse
Cleave to them close and other woes yet worse." 1

The whole content of the tragedy is that Oedipus does not suspect that he himself is the criminal and attempts, with every means, to discover him. The tragic irony lies in the fact that he is struggling to do for himself and his land that which will bring him to the consciousness of his innocent deed and with that will be destroyed. His whole action is directed against himself, and every curse he utters is meant for himself and falls back on him.

At the beginning of the tragedy he speaks out to his subjects suffering from the pestilence:

"Ye are all stricken sore; yet verily
Not one so stricken to the heart as I." 2

The spectator feels the whole gloomy truth, since the superhumanly severe suffering which hangs over Oedipus has already come to pass. It is, however, unknown to the speaker but will come to his consciousness only during the development of the play.

1) Murray p. 15
2) Murray p. 5

Later he says:

"Thereof I come to speak, a stranger still
To all this tale, a stranger to the deed." 1

But the spectator knows that he is the murderer of Laius.

He promises to track down the murderer and to fulfill his duty against the murdered Laius.

"I am his champion left, and, as I would
For mine own father....." 2

When Oedipus asks his miserable companion how her husband looked, she replies:

"In shape just such a man as thou." 3

What neither Jocasta nor Oedipus know, but what the spectator knows, is that she is speaking of no other than Oedipus's father.

Tiresias, perhaps, pictures Oedipus excellently:

"Eyes hast thou, but thy deeds thou canst not see
Nowhere thou art, nor what things dwell with thee." 4

The hypothesis of all tragic irony is here shown. His whole speech and actions carry the

1) Murray p. 14
2) Murray p. 15
3) Murray p. 43
4) Murray p. 24

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"I am his champion late, and, as I would
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"It shows just such a man as I am." 3

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Tiresias, perhaps, pictures Oedipus excellently:

"Yes dark eyes, but thy loads thou canst not see
Nowhere from orb, nor what things dwell with thee." 4

The hypocrisy of all Greek irony is here shown. His manly speech and actions carry the

1) Murray p. 14
2) Murray p. 15
3) Murray p. 23
4) Murray p. 24

gloomy ironic double-meaning in them, which prevails throughout the play. And the mighty effect on the spectator lies in the fact through every new feature of tragic irony he finds himself the knowing and superior one, as opposed to the acting mortals, lifted above the little world, which lives and errs before his eyes.

An intensifying of the motive of tragic irony is gained by the fact that it is developed, not only by mere words, but also in the action itself. Twice persons appear, once Jocasta and then the Corinthian messenger, with the assuring hope to be able to prove to Oedipus that he is innocent. Both times, however, they only succeed in bringing to light facts which convince him of his guilt. Jocasta recognizes this and kills herself. When Oedipus is torn from his blindness and comes to the realization of his terrible deed he blinds himself. Oedipus, who has been blind, as long as he saw, now will be blind, because he can see.

There has been one thing common in all these passages: the action of the peculiar form of irony of the play between the knowledge of the spectators and the ignorance of the actors, thus driving

gloomy tragic dramatic-ness lay in them. Action prevails throughout the play. And the mighty effect on the spectator lies in the fact through every new feature of tragic irony he finds himself the knowing and superior one, as opposed to the nothing-knowing, lifted above the little world, which lives and acts before his eyes.

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There has been one thing common in all these passages: the action of the peculiar form of irony of the play between the knowledge of the spectators and the ignorance of the actors, thus deriving

home the irony of the situation.

C. Homer

In Homer the doctrine of Divine Jealousy is not preached. He has his own method.

The plot of the "Iliad" is a simple one. Briefly, Achilles is incensed that Agamemnon has taken from him his "mead of honor", Briseis, and swears he will fight for the Greeks no longer. This eventually leads to much slaughter. Finally he is persuaded by his friend, Patroclus, to send him to battle. Patroclus is killed by Hector. When Achilles hears this he goes to the war, kills Hector, and drags his body about the city of Troy before he gives it back to his father, Priam.

Achilles best represents the ironic method of Homer. Achilles knows that he is doomed to an early death far from his native land. Hence his life was lived under the sentence of death. Achilles has his wish: a short life and a glorious one! He has his revenge and finds that at last he has gained nothing by it. Is not this the irony of fate?

Aristotle in his "Poetics" says that the requisite to the perfection of a tragedy is

that its plot should be complicated, and that it should imitate such actions as excite terror and pity. From this it follows that the change from prosperity to adversity should befall a person neither eminently virtuous or just, nor one involved in misfortune by deliberate vice or villainy, but by some error of human frailty; and this person should also be someone of high fame and flourishing prosperity, such as Oedipus. Although his rules were laid down for tragedy we may apply them in part, at least, to the epic. Does not this apply to Achilles? Due to his human frailty he comes to a tragic end. The Vanity of Human Wishes! And is the irony not doubly effective in that he knows what is to befall him?

Throughout, the fact that this whole quarrel is a paltry one is a piece of irony. Achilles is not a hero but a glorious young warrior, who errs and dies. He is overcome, not by great odds, but by his own weakness.

The "Iliad" is full of tragic irony. Achilles, brooding after Brisêis has been taken away, calls upon his mother, the sea-goddess:

"Mother, since it is but a little hour I have to live." [1]

1) Book I, p. 12

then the plot should be complicated, and that it should include such motives as exotic terror and pity. Near this it follows that the change from prosperity to adversity should befall a person neither exceptionally virtuous nor just, nor one involved in misfortune by deliberate vice or villainy, but by some error of human frailty; and this person should also be someone of high fame and flourishing prosperity, such as Oedipus. Although the rules were laid down for tragedy we may apply them to epic, at least, to the epic. Does not Zola apply to Nanilla? The to his human frailty he seems to a tragic end. The frailty of human flesh! And is the irony not doubly effective in that he knew what is to befall Nana?

Therefore, one feel that this whole episode in a century one is a piece of irony. Nanilla is not a hero but a flaccid young matron, who sees and dies. It is everyone, not by great deeds, but by his own weakness.

The "Illusa" is full of simple irony. Nanilla, concerning after Reliqia has been taken away, calls upon his mother, the pre-Raphaelite:

"Mother, since it is not a little hour I have to live."[1]

1) Nana 1, p. 12

After he has killed Hector, his mother again hears his agonizing cry and goes to him. She asks him why he is crying and he answers:

> "Mother, these things the Olympian has fulfilled for me. But what pleasure can I have therein, when my dear comrade is dead, Patroclus, whom I honored more than all my comrades?" 1

Then his mother answers him so simply and so pitifully:

> "Quickly to die then is thy doom, my child, from what thou sayest. For straightway after Hector thy fate is prepared for thee." 2

Hector in bidding farewell to Andromache has a presentiment that this is his last farewell:

> "But not for the after sorrows of the Trojans is my heart troubled-----but for thee, when some mailed Achaeon shall hale thee weeping away---" 3

In the"Odyssey"the epic has reached its concluding catastrophe; there is an accumulation and darkening of the omens: Odysseus, a beggar and recognized by none, has returned to his home. His wife Penelope has finally had to declare that she will give her hand to the one who is able to span the bow of Odysseus and shoot the arrow through the iron

1) Book XVIII, p. 368
2) Book XVIII, p. 369
3) Book VI, p. 125

After he has killed Hector, his mother Thetis hears his agonizing cry and goes to ask him why he is crying and he answers:

> "Mother, these things the Olympian has fulfilled for me. But what pleasure can I have therein, when my dear comrade is dead, Patroclus, whom I honored more than all my comrades" 1

Then his mother answers him so simply and so pitifully:

> "quickly to me then is thy doom, my child, from what thou says. For straightway after Hector thy fate is prepared for thee." 2

Hector is giving farewell to Andromache and a premonitement that this is his last farewell:

> "But not for the alien sorrow of the Trojans in my heart troubled------but for thee, when some Achaean warrior shall take thee weeping away---" 3

In the "Odyssey" the epic has reached its culminating catastrophe; there is an accumulation and darkening of the omens: Odysseus, a beggar and recognized by none, has returned to his home. His wife Penelope has finally had to declare that she will give her hand to the one who is able to span the bow of Odysseus and shoot the arrow through the iron

1) Book XVIII, p. 394
2) Book XVIII, p. 395
3) Book VI, p. 149

of the twelve hatchets set up, one behind the other. The suitors have gathered and are trying their luck.

The first to try is Leiodes, the overseer of the sacrifices, and who also knows how to prophecy from the sacrifices. He takes up the bow, but cannot bend it, so he puts it down saying:

> "Friends, of a truth I cannot bend it, let some other take it. Ah, many of our bravest shall this bow rob of spirit and of life--------" [1]

This may mean that the resistance of the bow will be stronger than the will and breath of the contender. But it may also mean that it will harm their souls and lives. Thus, Leiodes unconsciously prophecies what will happen in a short time. Odysseus will strike down the suitors with his own sword and bow. But its meaning is unknown to him.

Later in the same book there appears another significant passage. Many of the suitors have attempted to span the bow, but none has succeeded. While they rest, Odysseus, still unknown, asks them to give him the bow, so that he may see if he can span it. When Telemachos, in spite of the resistance of the suitors, has extended it to him, he carefully examines and tests the weapon well-known to him of old.

1) Book XXI p. 349

of the twelve Delphic nets up, one behind the other. The authors have gathered and are trying their luck.

The first to try is Jaidoes, the overseer of the sacrifices, and who also knows how to prophesy from the sacrifices. He takes up the bow, but cannot bend it, so he puts it down saying:

"Friends, of a truth I cannot bend it. Let some other take it. No, many of us must forever shall this bow rob of sight and of life----------" [1]

This may mean that the resistance of the bow will be stronger than the will and breath of the contender. But it may also mean that it will burn their souls and lives. Thus, Jaidoes unconsciously prophesies what will happen in a short time. Odysseus will strike down the authors with his own sword and bow. But his meaning is unknown to him.

Later in the same book there appears another significant passage. Many of the authors have attempted to open the bow, but none has succeeded. While they rest, Odysseus, still unknown, asks them to give him the bow, so that he may see if he can open it. When Telemachus, in spite of the resistance of the authors, has extended it to him, he effectually examines and tests the weapon well-known to him of old.

1) book XXI s. 129

The suitors scorn him and one finally calls out haughtily:

> "Oh, that the fellow may get wherewith to profit withal, just in such measure as he shall ever prevail to bend the bow!" [1]

This wish is naturally ironical and signifies the opposite. But here the irony strikes, for he does not suspect how soon his speech will be fulfilled to the word. After a few moments Odysseus will span the bow, the arrow will whiz through the axes and then begins the battle against the suitors.

There is a touch of dramatic irony introduced when Odysseus is asleep when laid upon the shore of his native land by the Phaeacian crew. When he awakens, he fails to recognize it at first. From then on the spectator watches, with keen interest, the man among his enemies until finally the beggar is revealed as the avenger.

D. Plato

When Plato created the character of Socrates, he deepened and enriched the conception of the "Eiron". Socrates is pictured as a thick-set figure with a remarkable head, snub nose and protuber-

1) Book XXI p. 357

The auditors accept his and one finally calls out haughtily:

> "Oh, that the fellow may get wherewith to profit withal. Just in such measure as by small ever prevail to lend the bare."[1]

This wish is naturally ironical and signifies the opposite. But here the irony strikes, for he does not suspect how soon his speech will be fulfilled to the word. After a few moments Ulysses will span the bow, the arrow will whis through the eyes and then begins the battle against the suitors.

There is a touch of dramatic irony introduced when Odysseus is asleep much laid upon the score of his native land by the Phaeacian crew. When he awakens, he fails to recognize it at first. Free then on the spectator watches, with less interest, the man among his enemies until finally the hero is revealed as the avenger.

D. Plato

When Plato created the character of Socrates, he designed and outlined the conception of the "Hero". Socrates is pictured as a thick-set figure with a remarkable head, small nose and protuber-

1) Book XXI p. 347

ant eyes, the center of a group of talkers. But when he spoke, he was capable of making hearts beat fast and tears gush.

This very contrast is ironical--this combining of the comical and serious. Even his contemporaries called Socrates ironical--but they were not complimentary. To them the term meant the foxy, cunning fellow. They thought that his profession of ignorance and humility was insincere. They did understand the irony of the tragic or comic reversal of fortune, but not this trick of making them feel uncomfortable if they took it as a joke or laughing at them if they took it too seriously. They were sure it was irony and to Socrates, then, must fall the honor of being systematically ironical.

The Platonic Dialogues made the "Eiron" its hero. The Dialogue is a semi-dramatic form, and Socrates, to be understood, must be studied like a character in a play. He uses irony, not merely to discomfit his opponents, or as a means of arriving at the truth, but because he is in his very essence an ironical man. When he is being tried at the court he says:

"Gentlemen, I do not know the effect which the

ant eyes, the center of a group of talents. But when he spoke, he was capable of making people feel and hear gaily.

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"Gentlemen, I do not know the effect which the

> "prosecution has produced upon you. But for my own part they almost made me forget who I am, so plausible were their arguments."

At times the Dialogues were not dramatic and the interchange of question and reply was merely to relieve the monotony. But in the dramatic Dialogues we find the "Eiron". And in these Dialogues we discover that tragedy and comedy were, to Socrates, essentially the same. The Wise Fool of the Old Comedy is tragically justified.

III. IRONY IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

It is rather difficult to trace the history of irony in English literature. There is evidence of it in the Tudor era, although it was not an element of literature at that time, and also in the following eras, up to the seventeenth century. With the dawn of this century it came into great prominence.

Irony cannot flourish when expression is direct and dignified; when men express their innermost feelings, and are not concerned with exposing the faults of mankind. It thrives when personal animosities are rife; when certain people, or groups of people, become identified with certain ideas. It is an instrument of controversy and is most successful in a controversial age.

The seventeenth century was just such an age. The great severity of the Puritan spirit was deadly to that which was best in literature; and added to this, was the bitter and confusing civil war. Bitterness and confusion tend to destroy artistic freedom and the spontaneous expression of beauty. Thus, both art and religion became involved and the result was the outpouring of some of the fiercest and most vindictive utterances in the English literature.

III. SOURCE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

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This period introduced new elements into English literature, which were destined to become enduring, and among them was the element of irony. As the political and religious dissentions became more general, the pamphlet became more academic, and with this the use of English began to replace Latin. Up until this time when authors had deemed it necessary to denounce what they disliked, they did so in no uncertain terms, but found sarcasm sufficient. All this elaborate and finished rhetoric was, for the most part, confined to Latin. Now, however, England, divided against herself, needed her own tongue.

Milton may be taken as an example of what happened to the country as a whole. In his life the whole Puritan tragedy is to be seen. He, the gentlest and most lyrical of poets, was one of the fiercest of pamphleteers. The bitterness of his attacks had little to do with his subject matter. He took up the pen to declare the glory and grandeur of the age to come, but his violent emotions involved him in antagonisms, which blinded the sanity of his tolerance. He was too unrestrained and unreasonable to produce the smoothness that is so necessary to irony. His irony is effective and vigorous, to be

sure, but is spoiled by his excessive rage. His personal indignation is always too apparent.

Although irony does flourish most in an age of controversy, it does not always spring from personal resentment. It is sometimes used to destroy prevailing errors rather than individual follies. For some time after Milton, irony fell back into the petty bickerings of egotistical men and became engulfed in bitterness and loss of temper. But gradually it was lifted from the depths to which it had fallen and entered into the realm of humor.

The temper of the eighteenth century was in a marked degree critical, and this critical temper expressed itself in brilliant, witty satire, which ranges from the fierce indignation of Swift and the keen sword-like thrusts of Pope and Sheridan, to the kindly humorous satire of Addison and Steele. The prevailing spirit was the spirit of comedy--of wit and humor and daring jest.

Humor is essentially the expression of a personal idiosyncrasy, and a man is a humorist because the tragic and comic elements of life present themselves to his mind in new and unexpected combinations. It is his function to strip off commonplaces

and explode empty pretences by the touch of a vigorour originality. The great mass of mankind is apt to look upon the humorist with disfavor. The masses can enjoy the gentle humor of Addison or Lamb, where kindliness of intention is so obvious, that the irony is harmless. But when the humorist begins to be more pungent, quiet people draw back, shocked. They shrink from the ugly realities of the world or their own minds. They prefer to overlook the hollowness of established conventions.

On the other hand, to some the sudden flash of genuine feeling is refreshing. One rejoices to see solemn conventions turned inside out and to have the air cleared by a sudden burst of laughter, even though it may have a savage touch to it.

Jonathan Swift was a man who was always in a temper, and he hated and denounced with a fury that dominated his whole life. He hated all forms of humbug and conceit; he detested meanness and intellectual dishonesty. He himself was honest and sincere and used his irony only against what was to him dishonest and despicable. When he lost his temper, he used this avenging irony of his against personalities:

and exploits, apart pretensions by the tones of a hypocrisy originality. The great mass of mankind is apt to look upon the immoralist with distrust. The massacre, one enjoy the gentle humor of indifference or pity, young kindness of laughter is so obvious; that their irony is instinct. But when the immoralist becomes to be more numerous, outer people drew back, shocked. They retreat from the ugly realities of the world to their own minds. They prefer to overlook the hollowness of outmoded conventions.

On the other hand, to some the sudden flash of genuine feeling is refreshing. One rejoices to see solemn conventions turned inside out and to have the air cleared by a sudden burst of laughter, even though it may hurt a nerve here and there.

Johnston Smith was a man who was always in a temper, and he hated and denounced with a fury those doctrines and whole life. He hated all forms of humbug and nonsense; he detested meanness and intellectual dishonesty. He himself was honest and sincere and made his irony only instinct when to his disgust and detestable. This is last dis-pect. Because this evening a irony of his against pre-sonalities:

"His vein, ironically grave,
Exposed the fool and lashed the knave....." [1]

It may be said that Swift reigns supreme in English literature as an ironist. He was conscious of the fact that he was an ironist:

"I grieve to be outdone by Gay
In my own humorous biting way,
Arbuthnot is no more my friend
Who dares to irony pretend,
Which I was born to introduce,
Refined it first, and show'd its use." [2]

Swift had a piercing insight into human nature; he had no philosophy, except that which consists in an intense hatred of all humbug. Thus he could pursue relentlessly an absurdity to its utter destruction. Indignant at the social distress of his country, he presented his scheme with complete suavity: "A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People of Ireland from being a Burden to their Parents or Country." The people in Ireland were starving and he proposed that they eat their children. This was written with an air of perfectly quiet, scientific persuasiveness. The more preposterous the proposal the more effective it is if the style is simple.

1) Quoted in Turner p. 29
2) Quoted in Turner p. 30

Swift may be compared to Plato in one respect; there is scarcely a use or method of irony which Swift did not use. His irony is often double edged; he strikes blow after blow; he pursues relentlessly the victim of his investigation. All disguise falls away; he is the avenging spirit; the naked strength of irony. His soul was tortured over the wickedness of the human animal.

"I loathe mankind, but I love Tom, Dick and Harry."

In "Gulliver's Travels" this arch-ironist indulges his imagination to the fullest extent. Here his artistic sense is triumphant and the whole is an ironical achievement that deserves great merit. This is a satire on government and society, on the fundamental and universal qualities of human nature. In Lilliput we see the essential pettiness of our life. In the last book Swift conceives a country where horses are intelligent and only man is vile. With much skill, he endows the Houyhnhnms with the very qualities which were sadly missing in his time; these horses were quiet, tolerant, self-contained; man was bestial, noisy, quarrelsome, avaricious. Yet Swift does not over-emphasize these

Swift may be compared to Pope in one respect; there is scarcely a case of a word of irony which Swift did not use. His irony is often double edged; he strikes twice after giving the purchase relentlessly the vicious or his antagonist. All disguise falls away; he is the avenging spirit; his sharp strength of irony. His soul has fastened over the wickedness of the human world.

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points; he lets the situation read its own lesson.

The whole is worked out carefully. There is an incessant double-view of mankind; it is as though one were looking through both ends of a telescope.

The "Tale of a Tub" is a vigorous and brilliant satire, but often irreverent and coarse, on the divisions of the Christian Church. It also includes a scathing analysis of many aspects of human life. The "Battle of the Books" is a brilliant satire on literary controversy; while the "Argument against Abolishing Christianity" is a masterpiece of comic irony.

Swift placed irony in the position where it was its duty to keep guard over public opinion, to preserve a common sense of fairness, to recall men to a mental equilibrium. Irony is needed at times to dispel obstinate illusions, which come from intellectual dishonesty or laziness, when the gentler form of satire is not effective. The writers who followed Swift, Henry Fielding and Laurence Sterne, use this form of irony.

Henry Fielding brought to perfection the comic romance. He seems to have possessed more

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Henry Fielding brought to perfection the comic romance. He seems to have possessed some

wit and humor, and more knowledge of mankind, than any other person of modern times, Shakespeare excepted. His characters and adventures are wonderfully diversified.

Fielding says in an introduction to "Tom Jones" that he has employed all the wit and humor at his command to endeavor to laugh mankind out of their favorite follies and vices.

The various ruling passions of men, their oddities, foibles, and humors engaged his attention. The inconsistencies that flow from vanity, from affectation, from hypocrisy, from pretended friendship, in fact, all the dissonant qualities, which are often blended together by the follies of men, could not fail to strike a person who had so fine a sense of ridicule. The ridiculous is predominant through all his writings; he is never so happy as when developing a character made up of motley and repugnant properties and shows a man of specious pretences, turning out, in the end, the very reverse of what he would appear.

Fielding did not use this irony to ridicule his contemporaries. His characters are, for the most part, caricatures. Their very names betray

them, yet they have individuality and life. His irony is general, not personal, but is intense in that it is the product of these caricatures, who are also people.

"Johnathan Wild" is Fielding's masterpiece as an instrument of irony. The characters are exceedingly bad and their behavior fantastic; yet the surprising thing is they are real people. Somehow Fielding has managed to infuse them with the breath of life.

Of late years it has become more and more apparent that Fielding was a satirist and reformer who spoke before his time. He was no mere buffoon or wit but a serious man of letters; he set himself squarely against the mistaken points of view and corrupt tendencies of his time; a supreme ironist, whose place is with Cervantes and Moliere.

Smollett said that the genius of Cervantes was transfused into the novels of Fielding, who painted characters and ridiculed the follies of life with equal strength, humor and propriety.

Fielding was known in Germany almost as soon as he was in England, for "Tom Jones" was published in Hamburg in 1750. Eventually most

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Fielding was known in Germany almost as soon as he was in England. For "Tom Jones" was published in Hamburg in 1749. Eventually most

of his works appeared in translation and had a great influence on German writers.

Goethe, when young, read Fielding with delight and in later years he acknowledged Fielding's influence. Musäus sets up "Tom Jones" as a model for all German Romance poets.

One peculiarity of Fielding's which greatly attracted some of the German writers was his manner of story-telling; he treated the events with irony, was always on the scene himself, and allowed the figures to move as puppets. He likewise often took the reader into his confidence, addressed him directly (or indirectly) or showed how he handled the mechanism. In his works, as well as in those of Goethe and Cervantes, one often comes upon assertions of the strict truth observed by the writer; but in spite of this professed anxiety for the strict adherence to the historical truth, all three were intent upon destroying this upon the slightest occasion.

A. Cervantes

Although Cervantes does not belong to English literature, he may properly be considered here as his works were very popular in England. They exerted a tremendous influence on such writers as

of his work appeared in translation and had a great influence on German writers.

Goethe, when young, read Wieland with delight and in later years he acknowledged Wieland's influence. Wieland sets up "Don Quixote" as a model for all heroic romance poets.

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Sterne and Fielding, and "Don Quixote" in particular became the model for the type of romance which they adopted.

Romance owes its origin to ignorance, vanity, and superstition. In dark ages of the world, when a man had rendered himself famous by wisdom or valour, his family and followers magnified his virtues, and represented his character and person as sacred and supernatural. The vulgar easily swallowed the bait, implored his protection and yielded the tribute of homage and praise even to adoration; his exploits were handed down to posterity with a thousand exaggerations; divine honors were paid; and altars were erected to his memory. Thus arose the heathen mythology, which is none other than a collection of extravagant romances. As learning advanced, and genius received cultivation, these stories were embellished with the graces of poetry; they were sung at festivals, rehearsed before battle as incentives to deeds of glory. Thus tragedy and the epic muse were born.

Thus, it is no wonder that ancients could not relish a fable in prose after so many remarkable events had been celebrated in verse; and it was not until the arts and sciences began to revive,

after the appearance of the barbarians in Europe, that the prose fable appeared. But when the mind of mankind was debauched by the imposition of priest-craft to the most absurd pitch of credulity, the authors of romance arose, and losing sight of probability, filled their performances with the most monstrous hyperbole. If they could not equal the ancients in point of genius, they were resolved to excel them in fiction. Instead of supporting their heroes with dignity, they endowed them with bodily strength, activity, and extravagance of behavior. Although nothing could be more ludicrous than these unnatural figures, they did not lack patrons and admirers, and the world became infected with the spirit of knight-errantry. Cervantes, by a superb piece of ridicule, reformed the taste of mankind, representing chivalry in the right point of view, and converting romance to purposes far more useful and entertaining, by making it assume the sock, and point out the ordinary follies of life.

"Don Quixote" drove knights-errant, giants, dwarfs, dragons, and their historians out of Spain. There was, of course, no such thing as

after the appearance of the Lindbergh in Mexico, that the press India appeared. But when the mind of mankind was dominated by the imposition of primitive-craft to the most absurd pitch of credulity, the authors of romance wrote, and listing might of possibility, filled their performances with the most commonplace hyperbole. If they could not equal the analogue in point of genius, they were required to excel them in fiction. Instead of supporting their morals with dignity, they endeavoured them with boldness strength, activity, and wintrevendon of behaviour. Although mortals could be more indifferent than these immortal figures, they did not lack patrons and admirers, and in most cases interested with the spirit of a light-problem. Geovanna, by a support-ciase of validity, restored the mind of mankind, temperamental curiosity in the right point of view, and converting tremendous propensities into more useful and substantial, by making it assume its base, and point out the ordinary foilies of life.

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knight-errantry in Europe at the time of Cervantes; therefore his aim was not to abolish a profession which did not exist, but to turn into ridicule the prevailing taste for writings filled with marvellous and unnatural adventures that had never existed except in books of chivalry. The Church and State had long tried to crush this type of literature, but had been unsuccessful; Cervantes accomplished this with a single blow.

B. Laurence Sterne

Sterne has often been called the English Rabelais, and was ambitious of being considered the English Cervantes, whom he idolized and professed to take for his model. But in comparison with both he falls short of the highest excellence. He represents a shallower vein of thought. He poured his contempt on hypocrisy, pomposity and pretence; he took too much interest in the relations of the sexes, and undervalued conventional respectability, which at one time earned for English society universal applause. He hated cruelty, meanness, dishonesty and malice. Yet he really had no particular doctrine to expound.

"Tristram Shandy" was begun as a local satire in which the characters were well-known and speedily recognized. But the story of the hero's

Indeed, contrary to the hope of the idea of conversion; therefore, his aim was not to abolish a civilization which did not exist, but to turn into civilized the prevailing tendo for building filled with barbarians and unnatural adventures that had never existed except in books of chivalry. The Church and State had long failed to create this type of literature, but had been successful: Cervantes accomplished this with a single blow.

D. Cervantes Theme

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To represents a shallower style of thought. He poured his contempt on chivalry, poesy and romance; he took too much interest in the relations of the sexes and endeavored conventional respectability, which at one time earned for English novels universal approval in moral circles. Sensuous, licentious and hollow, he really had no particular doctrine to expound.

"Cervantes Quixote" was begun as a local satire in which the characters were well-known and speedily recognized. But the story of the hero's

life was the least part of the author's concern. It was really a vehicle for satire on a great variety of subjects. The sayings of Uncle Toby are as well-known as those of Falstaff, and the sub-acid humor of Mr. Shandy plays around the cockles of the heart. Underlying all this is a profound knowledge of men and women; a consummate art of putting the great commonplaces of life in a form which make them seem original.

Human nature underlies Sterne's distortions. His counterbalance lay in the pathos of his humor and the power of reducing large outline with effect.

Sterne is an ironist of the first order. He steeps us in pathos and then whisks us down to something ludicrous. He felt the irony of things, that small step from the sublime to the ridiculous. In all his best writings a sob is never far from a smile. That is his irony, and though he creates "Tristram Shandy" to be laughed at, his power is his pathos.

In anticipation of what is to be found in such writers as Tieck and Heine, there are many peculiarities to be found in "Tristram Shandy".

life was the least part of the author's concern. He was really a vehicle for essays on a great variety of subjects. The margins of Uncle Tony are as well-known as Lamb or Hazlitt, and the self-said humor of Mr. Henry plays around the foibles of the heart, lodging all this in a profound knowledge of man and woman; a consummate art of painting the great commonplaces of life in a form which make them seem original.

Human nature underlies Strachey's distortions. His nonconformities lay in the pathos of his humor and the power of relating large outlines with effect.

Karpov is an irrelevant of the first order. He stands on it pathos and then relaxes up down to amusing buffoonery. As Yeat the irony of things, that small step from the sublime to the ridiculous. In all his best writings a man is never far from a smile. That is his irony, and though he creates "Caricatures Grand," he is imagined by his power in his pathos.

In conclusion of mark is to be found in such writers as Hardy and Lamb. There are many possibilities to be found in "Eleanora Duncan".

For example: in Volume I the preface is placed between chapters XX and XXI.[1]

In volume II are to be found such sections:

> "My mother went down, and my father went on, reading the section as follows:
> *
> *
> * * --- Very well,-----said my father, * * *
> *
> *" [2]

To quote again from volume II:

> "---You are wrong said my father, argutely, and for this plain reason,
> *
> *
> *" [3]

In this same volume two chapters XVIII and XIX are blank pages.[4]

Tieck ascribes to Sterne, along with a few others, the credit for having roused Germany from its long shallow slumber. He deemed his (Sterne's) treatment of the pain of life, the griefs of love, and the sorrows of super-sensitiveness above that of Rabelais. He also admired greatly his ability to combine the serious and comical, and his utter lack of prudery.

1) Vol. I, p. 164
2) Vol. II, p. 43
3) Vol. II, p. 49
4) Vol. II, p. 249-250

C. Shakespeare

The striking peculiarity of Shakespeare's mind was its generic quality; its power of communication with all other minds--it contained a universe of thought and feeling within itself and had no one peculiar bias, or exclusive excellence more than another. He had a mind reflecting ages past and present; all the people who ever lived are there. There was no respect of persons with him. His genius shone equally on good and evil, on wise and foolish, on king and beggar, like the genius of humanity, changing places with all of us at pleasure.

He turned the Globe around for his amusement and surveyed the generations of men and the individuals as they passed, with their different concerns, passions, follies, vices, virtues, actions and motives. The dreams of childhood, the ravings of despair, were the toys of his fancy. Airy beings came at his bidding, harmless fairies and the night hag waited at his call. The world of spirits lay open to him, like the world of real men and women; if the preternatural characters he describes could be supposed to exist, they would speak, feel, and act as he makes them. He had only to think of anything in order to

become that thing with all the circumstances belonging to it. When he conceived a character, real or imaginary, he entered into all thoughts and feelings.

Each of his characters is as much itself, and as absolutely independent of the rest, as well as of the author, as if it were a living person. The poet may be said, for the time, to identify himself with the character he represents, and to pass from one another, successively animating different bodies.

Does the tragic or comic in Shakespeare move us? Plato surmised that the genius for tragedy and genius for comedy were akin. This was exemplified centuries later by Shakespeare for his plays show that tragedy and comedy are one. At the time of Shakespeare, and for many years, the baffled rage of Shylock was staged as low comedy, until someone found out that the warp and woof of tragedy were in it. In "King Lear" Shakespeare has mingled the two, very often in one dialogue.

In the Greek drama everything was generally assumed to be brought about by fate, which, if absolute, eliminates from the circles of existence not only the responsibility of man, but the very essence of art itself, since, under that supposition, everything that is thought must be as completely regulated independ-

because that being with all the circumstances relating to it. When we conceive a contrary, real or imaginary, we entered into all thoughts and feelings.

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more not. Plato asserted that the genius for tragedy and genius for comedy were same. This was exemplified centuries later, by Shakespeare the his plays show that tragedy and comedy are one. At the time of Shakespeare, in the early years, the political idea of Europe was engaged in the comedy, until everyone found out that the wise and poor of tragedy were in it. In "King Lear" Shakespeare has adapted the two, very often in one sitting.

In the Greek drama tragedy, the gen-
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ently of our will, as everything that is done. As in the Greek drama, good and evil were placed before the characters and once having chosen the evil, the consequences followed. There was no quibbling, no retraction, for this was the decision of heaven. Shakespeare speaks much of fate and destiny. His dramas proceed generally from the assumption that the persons are free agents, and the goal they reach, happy or unhappy, is the result of their own wisdom or folly, virtue or crime. When his characters fail, it is because of their own weaknesses.

Irony, as exemplified by Shakespeare, and as we understand it, occurs in much the same form as it did in the Greek tragedies. The Greek poet employed it, not to hide from the spectators a mystery, but to excite their expectation, and to move their awe and pity as they perceive the ignorance of the agents as to the event. As was shown in "Oedipus Rex", the curse made by Oedipus upon the unknown criminal, recoiled upon himself in every particular; the appearance of Jocasta intended to reassure him but awakened his despair. These are, perhaps, the general stock-in-trade of the tragic poet, and instances are to be found in Shakespeare.

ability of mere skill, is everything that is done. In the great drama, good and evil were placed before the characters and upon certain grounds, the well, the wrong course followed. There was no quibbling, no hesitation, for this was the decision of reason, conscience and duty or this and duty. His course proceed generally from the assumption that the creatures are free agents, and the good long-range happy or unhappy, is the result of their own actions or fairly, wisely or crisp. The his characters call it is because of their own weaknesses.

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The irony most prevalent in "Macbeth" is somewhat different from the usual tragic irony in that it makes the protagonist utter words which convey a secondary sinister meaning. It is prophetic to a certain extent, yet it is a peculiar sort of irony. It is a retrospective irony. It does not prepare the spectator for what is to come but to remind him that it has been coming all the while.

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are staring at their bloody fingers, and he says:

> "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?" [1]

Lady Macbeth replies:

> "A little water clears us of this deed." [2]

This, however, only leads up to the irony in the sleep-walking scene. Lady Macbeth comes in rubbing her hands:

> "Here's the smell of blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

In Act III, Scene I, Macbeth entreats Banquo to come to the feast:

> "Macbeth: Fail not our feast
> Banquo: My Lord, I will not."

1) Act II, Scene I
2) Act II, Scene I

The irony most prevalent in "Macbeth" is somewhat different from the usual tragic irony in that it masks the protagonist with words which convey a secondary, sinister meaning. It is prophetic to a certain extent, but it is a peculiar sort of irony. It is a retrospective irony. It does not prepare the spectator for what is to come but to realize that it has been coming all the while.

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are plotting at their bloody villainy, and he says:

"Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?"[1]

Lady Macbeth replies:

"A little water clears us of this deed."[2]

This, however, only leads up to the irony in the sleep-walking scene. Lady Macbeth enters in walking her hands:

"Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him."[3]

"Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

In act III, Scene I, Macbeth entreats Banquo to come in the feast:

"Let your highness command us."
Banquo: "May it pleased your Highness, I will not."

1) Act II, Scene I
2) Act II, Scene I

In Scene 2, Lady Macbeth is talking with a servant:

"Lady Macbeth: Is Banquo gone from court?
Servant: Ay, Madam, but returns again to-
night."

But Banquo's Ghost returns to the banquet, the echo of his promise.

In Act I, Scene 7, Lady Macbeth is berating Macbeth for not fulfilling his promise to kill Duncan and Macbeth replies:

"I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none."

Again we have the echo of this in the banquet scene. Macbeth sees Banquo's Ghose in his chair and cries out:

"What man dare, I dare:
.....
Take any shape but that."

In fact, the whole scene is full of irony. Macbeth says:

"Here had we now our country's honour roof'd
Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present."

But in the meantime the Ghost has risen and taken Macbeth's place.

One more instance taken from "Julius Caesar" may suffice:

"Soothsayer: Caesar
Caesar: Ha! Who calls?
Casca: Bid every noise be still: peace yet again!
Caesar: Who is it in the press that calls on me?
I hear a tongue shriller than all music,
Cry, 'Caesar!' Speak; Caesar is turned to hear.
Soothsayer: Beware the Ides of March.
Caesar: What man is that?
Brutus: A soothsayer bids you beware the Ides of March.
Caesar: Let him before me; let me see his face.
Casca: Fellow, come from the throng; look upon Caesar.
Caesar: What say'st to me now? speak once again.
Soothsayer: Beware the Ides of March.
Caesar: He is a dreamer; let us leave him: pass." [1]

1) Act I, Scene II

IV. IRONY IN GERMAN ROMANTIC LITERATURE

Romantic irony, as defined by the "Dictionary of Psychology and Philosophy", is that type of irony "used by a set of writers (Schlege, Tieck, Solger) to characterize an aesthetic stand-point which emphasizes the artist's or critic's self-consciousness as the only reality and standard, and from this position of superiority, regards the world of so-called reality, with its laws, morality, etc., as futile, unreal, and illusory. This conviction grew out of Fichte's emphasis on the ego as the central principle of philosophy. The "genius", as critic, showed this irony by his exposition of the futility of the works criticized; as an artist, he could set forth characters or situations, which bring out the futility of life and its supposed principles".

Ricarda Huch in "Die Romantik" says that Goethe and Schiller demanded that the form, the mental vigor of the poet, should absorb the substance, and this is what is meant by the irony introduced by Schlegel into literature. The constant destruction and recreation of his object is nothing but superiority over substance which he himself has chosen, in which he has buried himself, and out of which

IV. INSET IN DEPTH BY MEANS OF LITERATURE

"Romantic Irony", as defined by the "Dictionary of Psychology and Philosophy", is that type of irony "used by a set of writers (Schlegel, Tieck, Solger) to characterize an aesthetic stand-point which emphasizes the artist's or artist's self-consciousness as the only reality and creator, and from this position of superiority, regards the world of so-called reality, with its laws, morality, etc., as fanciful, absurd, and illusory. This conception grew out of Fichte's emphasis on the ego as the central principle of philosophy. The 'genius', as artist, formed this irony by his estimation of the reality of the world relationship as an artist. He could not face the characters or situations, which bring out the reality of life and its supposed principles".

Steven Dedalus in "Ulysses Romantic" says that Poetic and Sculptor desired that the form, the material vigor of the work, should remain the question, and this is what is meant by the irony introduced by Schlegel into literature. The constant destruction and reformation of his object is making out superiority over substance which he himself has chosen. In order to be the buried himself, and out of which

he can lift himself at any time, to change it at will and to bring it into any form. She says further that irony is best translated by "Geistesfreiheit", freedom of spirit. Not "naturlos", but "naturfrei". [1]

The true ironist is able to release himself from the earthly element in which he lives and moves, to rise above it, and view it as a diminishing point under him, and to recognize its proportionate nothingness.

On the other hand, Silz in "Early German Romanticism" says that irony is superior self-criticism; the ridicule of the inadequacy of one's own production. Irony is a result of the writer's recognition of his own inability to attain his ideal; hence irony is negative, renunciatory and defensive--a sort of inner compensation for a consciousness of inferiority. This irony is found in writers whose artistic intelligence far exceeds their formative powers, such as Tieck, Brentano, and Schlegel. [2]

Frye in "Romance and Tragedy" maintains that Friedrich Schlegel proclaims in sublime paradox that formlessness is the highest form of art. He is the prophet of transcendental buffoonery and irony, of "Freiheit" and "Willkür". [3] He also claims that irony, which he calls "transcendental irony" was nothing more than an attempt by Friedrich Schlegel to pass off one's mortification at

1) p. 278
2) p. 181
3) p. 57

one's failings and shortcomings by being the first to ridicule them when they were too conspicuous to escape general attention. It was an effort to insure the romantic poet against the mediocrity of his own gifts.[1]

Irony, as developed by the romanticists in Germany, has a somewhat different meaning from that popularly understood today. There is, to be sure, some of the true irony about it, yet it has a decidedly different and interesting twist. It is probably the most misunderstood of the romantic terms. Current notions of irony are derived, not from the pure theory of the early Romanticists but from its distorted application by the later Romantic writers.

To grasp more fully irony as it is used in German literature it is necessary to have some comprehension of the Romantic period. It would be utterly useless to attempt a complete analysis of the Romantic literary movement, but an understanding of the salient features of this period will provide the necessary background.

The Romantic movement was ushered into Germany to some extent by Lessing. Independent, tireless and vigorous, he enlightened and educated the German mind. He combined proud independence

1) p. 84

with a love of his fellow men regardless of creed. But Lessing was denied by the Romanticsts, thanks to Friedrich Schlegel, who, in an essay, stressed everything irregular, unsystematic and paradoxical in him. His theory of the ego is pure mind, not nature, and the Romanticists could never claim such a man as this.

To Herder they owed more. Lessing closed the old century, while Herder ushered in the new. Man becomes now not only a thinking and moral being, but a part of nature; he prefers intuition to reason, and overcomes narrowmindedness by originality, not reason. His was the genius of receptivity and it is this from which the Romanticists derive the most value. From this results their study of languages, European and Asiatic, their love of the national in their own literature and in foreign, and their love of Spanish romance and Shakespeare.

Goethe and Schiller had been inspired by the "Freigeisterei" of passion, its demand for freedom and spirit of revolt. Weimar became the center of culture and for a time ruled the intellectual world. Although Goethe and

with a love of the fellow man regardless of creed, but Goethe was fearful of the democratic, liberal so determined Schlegel, who, in an essay, attacked everything French, Lessing, Schiller and Herder as a man. His theory of the ego is quite what, not truth, but the Romantic poets could hardly claim such a man as their.

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Goethe and Schiller had been influenced by the "Triglottistical" of Herder, his demand for freedom and spirit of revolt. Schiller becomes the leader of culture and for a time ruled the intellectual world. Although Goethe and

Schiller were entirely different in character, yet both were inspired by the common ideal of humanity. They both attempted in their works to produce a great and free personality, to raise it above the limits of petty conventions, to allow it to breathe the pure air of the universally human. In other words, their aim was universality. Goethe and Schiller led the authors of the day out of narrow conceptions of life into the broad daylight of universal humanity. They aspired toward a state of human culture where there was to be an equilibrium of the sensuous and the spiritual, instinct and duty, egoism and altruism. To be sure, they sometimes went beyond the bounds of reality into the realm of abstract thought, or a so-called ideal world. But the Romanticists went even further astray than these men, whom they attempted to imitate.

Both Goethe and Schiller paved the way for Romanticism in their attitude toward the rights of passion and toward Philistinism, which was to the Romanticists, one of the cardinal sins.

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There is one more influence of

German Romanticism which must be mentioned, and that is Fichte. Fichte teaches that sensation as a source of knowledge must be thrown away--we cannot be sure of any outside world. All existence outside the thinking soul is phantasmal. He maintains that what is both natural and supernatural, exists only through the activity of the ego and the Romanticists understood by this that the ego was not a divine being, but a human, thinking being. This idea which causes the whole world to sink into nothing before it, greatly attracted these enthusiastic young writers. But, as Fichte by his theory annhilated the external world, they carried their subjective tendency to excess.

The German Romantic period was in part initiated by the Schlegel brothers, William and Friedrich. They assumed direct control and exercised a strong influence on the current literature of their time. Influenced by the example of Goethe and Schiller and the Weimar group, they, together with Wackenroder, Novalis, and Tieck formed the Berlin-Jena group, which was to set the literary fashion. These men were the inner circle of the older school.

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Jena group, which was to set the literary fashion.
These men were the inner circle of the older school.

They attacked the Berlin school of enlightenment and satirized shallow society literature. In the cry for "nature" in everything, they departed completely from nature and reality in writings and demanded that the work of art should be the free product of the inner consciousness. They freed the imagination from all restraints and repudiated all established forms. Their criticisms and satirical dramas were used to attack existing forms.

Before the advent of Goethe and Schiller there had been a great love for the historical past of Germany; the writers were wont to dwell on the beauties of Gothic temples, to sing of knights of the Middle Ages, to people the forests with bards and druids. This had all vanished under the influence of classic antiquity. During the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries there was a strong reaction and those tendencies which had been strong before now began to reassert themselves. The admiration of classic antiquity was merely one of the many influences. The antique was too severe and cold, and the people demanded something warm and musical; something homelike and German. They wanted to become enthusiastic, they

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something warm and musical; something romantic and
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wanted to poetize, to dream, to bathe in moonlight, to hear the grass grow and understand what the birds said.

Then, too, these men found little to attract them in the outside world and withdrew into their own egos for themes.

Thus, this representative group of men gathered about the Romantic banner, sworn enemies of Philistinism. Their main purpose was to re-establish the eternal synthesis of poetry and philosophy. To quote from Friedrich Schlegel's "Fragmente":

> "Die ganze Geschichte der modernen Poesie ist ein fortlaufender Kommentar zu dem kurzen Text der Philosophie: Alle Kunst soll Wissenschaft und alle Wissenschaft soll Kunst werden; Poesie und Philosophie soll vereinigt seyn".[1]

Their aim was to unite all the severed branches of poetry into contact with philosophy; to combine poetry and prose, genius and criticism, the poetry of nature and the poetry of art; to make poetry social, and society poetic.

The Romanticists rebelled against existing social laws, identified life and poetry and deemed the genius sovereign. Romanticism was a reaction in favor of imagination and faith against the rationalism of the preceeding age; and likewise a

1) Minor Vol. II, p. 200

reaction in favor of Christianity and the middle ages as opposed to Hellenism.

Love, faith, chivalry, and honor were to be the inspiration of romantic poetry. There was to be a unity of head and heart, of poetry, life, philosophy, and religion. Thus, all limits were overthrown between prose and verse, life and art, morality and intellect, science and religion, imagination and religion. State, science, politics and religion were all one. The only controlling power was irony, which looked down from the heights and smiled at that which fancy created. But sadly enough, imagination ran rife and the Romanticists retired eventually into a world of mere imagination.

Although this is a very inadequate treatment of the Romantic literary movement it may serve as a brief introduction to our study of irony.

A. Friedrich Schlegel

Schlegel has been acclaimed the originator of modern criticism. He was the actual founder of the Romantic School. He wanted to preach, like Paul, and subjugate the spiritual realms of the earth. He loved to theorize and desired to be the leader for the whole Romantic movement, in religion as well as in aesthetics.

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4. Friedrich Schlegel

Schlegel has been considered the originator of modern criticism. He was the intimal forerunner of the romantic School. He wanted to preach, like Paul, and mitigate the spiritual realm of the earth. He loved to theorize and desired to be the leader for the whole romantic movement, in religion as well as in aesthetics.

Schlegel perhaps best exemplifies every phase characteristic of the movement. Under the influence of Fichte his writings become mystical. Then distracted by the condition of Germany he turns to the past and is dazzled by the Middle Ages. He considers the church of Rome the mother of civilization. He starts out firm and decisive, but gradually he slips into a dreamy indefiniteness, until he finally fades from the picture.

To Schlegel must be given the credit for having originated the theory of Romantic irony. There are many references to substantiate this claim. Hettner asserts that "Friedrich Schlegel hat den Namen und die Doktrin der Ironie gefunden".[1] Walzel declares Schlegel "der Entdecker der romantischen Ironie".[2] Ricarda Huch, in "Die Romantik", says:-- "die viel beredete romantische Ironie; eine von den vielen Begriffsbestimmungen, die Friedrich Schlegel in die Literatur einführte".[3]

Schlegel was, perhaps, particularly suited for the developing of such a theory, as he was of a sanguine nature, an extremist and enthusiast, passionately espousing changing goals or ideals. Once he became interested in a cause, he demanded the absolute.

1) p. 64
2) Lussky p. 4
3) p. 278

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every phase characteristic of the Romantic. Under
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for having originated the theory of Romantic irony.
Critics are very reluctance to substantiate this claim.
Brother Augusta says that "Friedrich Schlegel hat den
Namen und die Idee für Ironie gefunden".[1] Julian
believes Schlegel "der Erfinder der romantischen
Ironie".[2] Minerva says, in "Die Romantik", says:--
"Die viel berufene romantische Ironie; also von dem
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subject.

1) p. 64
2) Dresdy p. 4
3) p. 370

1. Influence of Greek Poetry

For a time Schlegel was so interested in Greek art and literature, that he asserted that the Greeks were the only ones who had any taste. He had become interested in the literature, chiefly as it was necessary for a more complete understanding of the art. But he became very involved in the study, chiefly Plato and the tragedians, and even entertained some idea of making a characterization of Greek literary poetry and literature. But the plan did not materialize.

He felt that the greatness of the Greeks was not a sense for art, nor high culture, nor sublimity nor understanding, but a combining of all of these factors.

In his essay "Über das Studium der Griechischen Poesie" he begins with a denial of the aesthetic worth of all modern poetry. Three great poets stand out: Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe. But these men, according to Schlegel, strove more to present to humanity the best, than to produce perfect art, from the standpoint of the beautiful. He tried to show that by its very nature, the culture of modern life had to become what it did. The only hopeful element was

its striving for an aesthetic maximum. This is found only in the universal, the permanent and the necessary--otherwise objectivity. The interesting is only a transition stage in the development of modern art.

The objective, being fixed, is never attainable, but is the goal toward which all true lovers of poetry must strive. To quote from his "Fragmente":

> "Mein Versuch über das Studium der griechischen Poesie ist ein manierierter Hymnus in Prosa auf das Objektive in der Poesie. Das Schlechteste daran scheint mir der gänzliche Mangel der unentbehrlichen Ironie; und das Beste, die zuversichtliche Voraussetzung, dass die Poesie unendlich werth sei; als ob dies eine ausgemachte Sache wäre." [1]

He felt that it was time for an aesthetic revolution--for an awakening belief in the beautiful, in the objective. Objective criticism is a true theory of art, which needs a universal history of art. This necessity, he felt, was furnished by the Greeks. To imitate the Greeks one must bring to the study an objective philosophy of history and an objective philosophy of art.

The complete objectivity which seemed to characterize all Greek literary art, raised

1) Minor Vol. II, p. 184

it to the utmost perfection. Objectivity was synonymous with beauty, and, in his youthful enthusiasm, he considered this the sine qua non of great literary achievement.

By objectivity he meant complete freedom from all expressions of subjective interest in the characters in his works, a disinterested attitude. This he considered to have been attained by the Greeks, especially Sophocles.

He also found the "divine breath of irony" in the ancient poets. He defined it as "die Stimmung, welche alles übersieht und sich über alles Bedingte unendlich erhebt, auch über eigne Kunst, Tugend oder Genialität". He said that the Socratic irony aroused a feeling of strife in the limited and unlimited, the finite and infinite.

Schlegel also wanted to be the Socrates of his age. He admired the sovereignty of Socrates' mind--the attitude of irony. To quote again from the "Fragmente":

> "Die Sokratische Ironie ist die einzige durchaus unwillkürliche und doch durchaus besonnene Verstellung.---In der soll alles Scherz und Ernst sein, alles treuherzig offen, und alles tief verstellt. Sie entspringt aus der Vereinigung von Lebenskunstsinn und wissenschaftlichem Geist, aus dem Zusammentreffen

"vollendeter Naturphilosophie und vollendeter Kunstphilosophie. Sie enthält und erregt ein Gefühl von dem unauflöslichem Widerstreit des Unbedingten und des Bedingten, der Unmöglichkeit und Notwendigkeit einer vollständigen Mittheilung. Sie ist die freieste aller Lizenzen, denn durch sie setzt man sich über sich selbst weg; und doch auch die gesetzlichste, denn sie ist unbedingt notwendig. Es ist ein sehr gutes Zeichen, wenn die harmonisch Platten gar nicht wissen, wie diese stete Selbstparodie zu nehmen haben, immer wieder von neuem glauben und misglauben, bis sie schwindlich werden, den Scherz gerade für Ernst, und den Ernst für Scherz halten". [1]

Socrates, by being his own master, ruled over tradition and custom. Herein lies the duality of irony--it destroys to build anew. The old is trampled down--the new created.

2. Influence of Fichte

Fichte's philosophy exerted a great influence over Schlegel, even though it was in direct contrast to the system of the Greeks. It did not reflect the artificially-conceived actuality, as did the teachings of Plato, but the longing to become free from actuality and its forms.

Fichte contends that there is nothing in the outer, visible world that is not already present in man's mind. That which lies outside man is really an illusion. The ego is the only reality. The human ego now possessed infinite, unlimited freedom, will-

1) Minor Vol. II, p. 198

power, and self-mastery. Man could create and tear down at will. The finite world, according to Fichte, is nothing but a voluntary limitation of man's ego.

Thus the human personality is enlarged. It possesses sovereignty over the world of the senses. Man is a king in his own creation. The artistic omnipotence of the ego and the arbitrariness of the poet can submit to no law.

He realizes completely the ego, when he aspires to lift up again the world, to change it into a world of freedom. It is the striving of the infinite to pass beyond its own limitations. Hence, the individual ego is superior to everything it does; the artist is superior to his own creations. The world, apprehended through the senses, becomes a real world, the whole activity of the mind springs from the creative imagination; this is, then, the central force of the ego.

What appealed to Schlegel was the absolute nature of its subjectivity. At first he had agreed with the Greeks that spirit and matter were joined in harmonious oneness. Now spirit became of more value than matter. The supremacy of the human ego stood out with a decisiveness and individuality which made everything else appear small in comparison.

This attitude of superior self-contemplation appealed strongly to the rational side of the early Romantic character. The Romanticists believed that poetic inspiration should be controlled by artistic self-consciousness and reason; that the poet should not lose himself in his work but should hold himself above it and above himself.

When Schlegel fully comprehended Fichte's theory he became a romanticist. He could now look upon the world from the heights, conscious of the mastery of self.

3. Influence of Goethe

Schlegel had a revival of interest for Goethe, probably the same summer in which he became interested in Greek tragedy. It is probable that a deeper insight into Greek tragedy may have opened his eyes to the beauties of "Tasso" and "Iphigenie"; but it is likewise probable, that an insight into Goethe's classic manner may have led him to drink from the fount of one of his own countrymen, for after all, he places "Deutschheit" above "Griechheit".

His acquaintance with Goethe's works was intimate and he derived some of his aesthetic laws from them. He drew the conclusion

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His acquaintance with Goethe's works was intimate and he derived some of his aesthetic laws from him. He drew the conclusion

that the true standard of Goethe's works was the beautiful. It's character is objectivity. Yet the poet is not strictly objective. He stands mid-way between. The objective, or beautiful, is no mere illusion here; it is a reality.

In his essay on "Wilhelm Meister" Schlegel says that one must not assume that the poet is not in earnest because he scarcely ever mentions his hero without irony and because he seems to smile down upon his own masterpiece from the serene heights. "Die Ironie schwingt über dem ganzen Werke". [1] Other instances of irony are Jarno's lack of imagination and Amelia's lack of judgment and sense of the appropriate.

"Wilhelm Meister" also brought back the philosophical romance into German life. It deals more with the history of the human soul than with the outward life, thus testifying to the importance assigned to the inner life. Schlegel later tried to imitate this in "Lucinde", but was unsuccessful.

Scholl in his article on "Friedrich Schlegel and Goethe" maintains that Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" was the great "Anschauung" which led Schlegel to develop his idea of irony in the aesthetic

1) Minor Vol. II, p. 175

field.[1] Goethe could put himself at will into any mood. When Schlegel says, that the only philosophy which remains for the poet is "der Schaffende", which originates in freedom and the belief in freedom, and which shows that the human spirit impresses its laws upon all things, and that the world is its art product, he is thinking more of Goethe than of Fichte. He goes on further to say, that, but for Goethe's poetic product, irony could never have left the strict confines of its home and become centered in poetry. The earlier phases of his doctrine are distinctly literary and are developed from Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" and the dialogues of Socrates.

4. Influence of Shakespeare

As a critic Schlegel also had to deal with the modern writers, and did not approve of them, as they lacked objectivity, therefore beauty.

The quality to which he objected most was what he called "das Wesentliche-Moderne", "das Individuelle","das Interessante".

"Das Interessante" designated to Schlegel the fundamental quality of modern poetry as contrasted to objectivity, the fundamental quality of the ancient Greeks. But to him this did not mean

1) p. 132

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"Das Interessante" designated to Schlegel the fundamental quality of modern poetry as contrasted to objectivity, the fundamental quality of the ancient drama. But to him this did not mean

1) p. 152

something to incite curiosity; it signified "das innig mit dem Gegenstand Verbundensein", the constant and pervading presence of the author in his work. Schlegel felt in these modern writers something he had not felt in reading the ancients; namely, the intimate relation between the author and his creations. He was often seized with the desire to examine the craftsman in the background instead of becoming absorbed in the action of the story.

Schlegel now became very much interested in Shakespeare and considered him the greatest writer since the ancients. To him, Shakespeare characterized most completely and most excellently the spirit of modern poetry; he revealed to the greatest extent that quality so characteristic of modern poetry, "das Interessante". There was ever present the feeling that the master was hovering over his productions.

There have been many critics who have claimed that Schlegel, under the influence of Fichte and Shakespeare, renounced absolute objectivity for absolute subjectivity. They also claim that he also lost his admiration for Goethe, whom he had

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There have been many critics who have claimed that Schlegel, under the influence of Fichte and Shakespeare, renounced absolute objectivity for absolute subjectivity. They also claim that he also lost his admiration for Goethe, whom he had

considered an augury for the future development of objectivity in German letters. Thus, these critics considered that Romantic irony was synonymous with literary subjectivity.

Hegel asserts that Schlegel's theory of Romantic irony is subjective and is deduced from a gross misunderstanding of Fichte. In his "Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts" he says: "den vom Herrn Friedrich von Schlegel in einer früheren Periode seiner schriftstellerischen Laufbahn aufgebrachten und bis zu jener sich selbst als das Höchste wissenden Subjektivität gesteigerten Ausdruck der Ironie". [1]

Hermann Hettner speaks of romanticism as "durch und durch.....realitätsloser Subjectivismus".[2] And again: "Das Geheimniss der neuen romantischen Poesie ist der Subjectivismus. Nur der Einzelne, das Subject, hat recht. Die ihm gegenüberstehende Welt, das Object, ist ihm schlechthin unterthan und sein willfähriges Spielwerk". [3]

Haym, in discussing Fichte's influence on Schlegel says that he, Schlegel, was greatly impressed, as it offered freedom from reality and its forms. He goes on to say that one would have thought that Schlegel would have been repelled by this exaggerated subjectivity so hostile to beauty.

1) Quoted in Lussky p. 9
2) p. 32
3) p. 38

Walzel maintained that Schlegel had two theories, an early one and a late one. At first irony was identical with "das Naive", hence with objectivity; but later it represents absolute subjectivity. "Mehr und mehr rückt Subjektivität an die Stelle, die in Friedrich's erster Periode die Objektivität eingenommen hat". [1]

On the other hand, however, some critics do not consider irony identical with subjectivity. Their contention is that it is synonymous with literary objectivity.

Marie Joachimi in "Die Weltausschauung der Deutschen Romantik" says: "Im Grunde, ist diese Ironie dasselbe, was Friedrich Schlegel, solange er noch in den Griechen die grössten Meister der Kunst und in Plato den tiefsten Philosophen sah als 'Objektivität' bezeichnete". [2] Also: "Ich möchte sogar noch mehr behaupten, nähmlich dass diese Ironie nichts anders ist als die Objektivität aus dem Studium von 1795, nach der alle Dichtung streben sollte, so lange Friedrich Schlegel noch an die 'Griechheit' glaubte".[3] And she goes on to show that the best examples of this objectivity of irony were to be found in Shakespeare.

Walter Silz in "Early German Romanticism" considers Schlegel's irony as an objective quality.[4]

1) Quoted in Lussky p. 27
2) Quoted in Lussky p. 40
3) Quoted in Lussky p. 40
4) Chapter on Romantic Irony

A. E. Lussky in his book "Tieck's Romantic Irony" maintains that Schlegel never identified irony with subjectivity. He develops Schlegel's theory very carefully.

Schlegel had at first been greatly influenced by the objectivity of Greek poetry, or perfect beauty. But, as has been said, he had to come in contact with the moderns and became very interested in "das Interessante". He became absorbed in Shakespeare and considered him the greatest of all moderns; and his enthusiasm never diminished. "Shakespeare aber ist unter allen Künstlern derjenige, welcher der Geist der modernen Poesie überhaupt am vollständigsten und am treffendsten charakterisiert.--Man darf ihn ohne Übertreibung den Gipfel der modernen Poesie nennen."[1]

Even though Schlegel admired Goethe very much he never considered him an equal of Shakespeare. In "Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie" he says--"dass man Goethe sehr Unrecht tue, wenn man ihn auf diese Weise in einen deutschen Shakespeare metamorphosiert".[2]

Schlegel chose Shakespeare as the chief representative of modern poets, because he best exemplified what to him was the characteristic quality of modern poetry, "das Interessante". But he did not

1) Minor Vol. I, p. 107
2) Minor Vol. I, p. 114

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Schlegel chose Shakespeare as the chief representative of modern poets, because he best exemplified what to him was the characteristic quality of modern poetry, "das Interessante". But he did not

1) Minor Vol. . . . 107
2) Minor Vol. . . . 114

mean by this subjective; he meant individual and characteristic.

To be sure Schlegel had some difficulty in combining the terms "objectivität" and "interessant". He had felt for some time that Shakespeare was objective but found it difficult to connect that with "interessant". But finally the solution flashed upon him. While puzzling over this fact, he thought of his early religious training and the immanence and transcendence of God in his relation to the universe.

Despite his transcendency, God is immanent in the world. Proceeding from this he concluded that as with God, so with the artist. The creations in both cases are perfectly objective, the creators being completely detached from their productions; nevertheless, both creations are self-revelations of their creators. Thus, Shakespeare, despite his transcendence, is present in his works and reveals his invisibility by the things he has made. Also, as the spirit of God's love pervades his creations, so does that of the artist. In other words, there is always a revelation of the personalities behind the respective creations.

Schlegel had felt that Sophocles, too, was objective, but not in the manner of Shakespeare. Sophocles had not instilled any of his own personality into his characters, such as Ajax, Oedipus, Antigone, Orestes and the like. Although he did achieve objectivity he did so at the expense of the fullness and abundance of life. Whereas Shakespeare did identify himself with his characters, but never beyond a certain point.

From all this Schlegel deduced his theory of irony. To him it signified joy in the possession of the powers of an infinite spirit and also joy in the possession of powers of the intellect. This brings to mind the Romantic mood. Mood emphasizes the emotional side in poetry, while irony represents the intellectual. While the poetic mood lasts irony must stay in the background. But when the poetic mood is over, then irony comes to the fore. He felt that the poet who subjects himself completely to feeling can know no irony, as this feeling takes complete possession of him. Emotion absorbs life into itself, while the intellect pushes it away and looks upon it from a distance. The mind must keep a watchful lordship over itself.

He felt that the true home of irony was philosophy, which he defined as logical beauty. "Die Philosophie ist die eigentliche Heimat der Ironie, welche man logische Schönheit definieren möchte: denn über all, wo in mündlichen oder geschriebenen Gesprächen und nur nicht ganz systematisch philosophiert wird, soll man Ironie leisten fordern.---Die Poesie allein kann sich bis zur Höhe der Philosophie erheben und ist nicht auf ironische Stellen begründet wie die Rhetorik. Es gibt alte und moderne Gedichte, die durchgängig und überall den göttlichen Hauch der Ironie atmen".[1]

As can be seen, the old conception of irony became changed. There was some of the irony, as that exemplified by the English writers; it was used as a weapon to expose the follies and evils of the time. But it became something more; it was the stimulant which strengthened the mind; the"rare, winged, holy atmosphere" which all great minds pour over their works.

The characteristic feature of all irony is its duality. Schlegel has said in his "Fragmente": "Ironie ist die Form des Paradoxen. Paradox ist alles, was zugleich gut und gross ist." [2]

1) Minor Vol. II, p. 188
2) Minor Vol. II, p. 190

In romantic irony the duality is subtle and metaphysical; it rests upon the double nature of the infinite world of the spirit as compared with the finite world of matter. The artist's individuality towered over his creations; the duality here consists in the greatness of the artist's mind as compared to the littleness of his works. The artist, becomes master of matter and spirit. He can play any role, yet he stays aloof from his acts. Therefore, irony is the freest of all liberties, as it enables us to rise above ourselves.

When Schlegel left Jena for Berlin, he went as a reformer. He used his irony to hold up to ridicule the Philistinism, the false rationalism and unrestrained sentimentalism of the day, much in the manner of the irony of Smollett, Sterne, and Fielding.

To sum up Schlegel's theory, he expects two things of a poet; self-expression and self-restraint. A moderation of both is necessary, otherwise self-destruction would result. The spirit of divine inspiration must not flow unchecked.

In the "Fragmente" he says:

"Um über einen Gegenstand gut schreiben zu können, muss man sich nicht mehr für ihn

"interessiren; der Gedanke, den man mit Besonnenheit ausdrücken soll, muss schon gänzlich vorbei sein, einen nicht mehr endlich beschäftigen. So lange der Künstler erfindet und begeistert ist, befindet er sich für die Mittheilung wenigstens in einem illiberalen zustande. Er wird dann alles sagen wollen; welches eine falsche Tendenz junger Genies, oder ein richtiges Vormittheil aller Stümper ist. Dadurch verkennt er den Werth und die Würde der Selbstbeschränkung, die doch für den Künstler wie für den Menschen das Erste und das Letzte, das Nothwendigste und das Höchste ist. Das Nothwendigste: denn überall, wo man sich nicht selbst beschränkt, beschränkt einen die Welt; wodurch man ein Knecht wird. Das Höchste: denn man kann sich nur in den Punkten und an den Seiten selbst beschränken wo man unendlich Kraft hat, Selbstschöpfung und Selbstvernichtung. Selbst ein freundschaftliches Gespräch, was nicht in jedem Augenblick frei abbrechen kann, (der nichts für sich behält, und alles sagen mag) aus unbedingter Willkür, hat etwas Illiberales. Ein Schriftsteller, der sich rein ausreden will und kann, der nichts für sich behält, und alles sagen mag, was er weiss, ist sehr zu beklagen. Nur vor drei Fehlern hat man sich zu hüten. Was unbegingte Willkür, und sonach Unvernunft oder Übervernunft scheint und scheinen soll, muss dennoch im Grunde auch wieder schlechthin notwendig und vernünftig sein; sonst wird die Laune Eigensinn, es entsteht Illiberalität, und aus Selbstbeschränkung wird Selbstverichtung. Zweitens: man muss mit der Selbstbeschränkung nicht zu sehr eilen, und erst der Selbstschöpfung, der Erfindung und Begeisterung Raum lassen, bis sie fertig ist. Drittens: man muss die Selbstbeschränkung nicht übertreiben." [1]

Irony, as propounded by Schlegel, does have certain values in that it curbs enthusiasm;

1) Minor Vol. II, p. 187

it provides the right balance in poetic production; and it stands for clearness of vision, presence of mind, restraint and calm judgment.

Much stress is laid upon Willkür in the mind of the literary genius, but for this he demanded a back-ground of absolute objectivity and that it be in conformity with the highest ideals of thought and action.

But such is the weakness of man! Schlegel intended to conquer with the powers of his mind great stretches of knowledge, which he hoped to rule over with his irony. But gradually he became more and more interested in the emotional, mystical, and religious side of life. Now, instead of glorying in the supremacy of the mind, he turned to religion, and with this his theory of irony changed. The poet still played a dual role, but as the stream of his inspiration flowed from the deeper source, from the divine will, the intellectual supremacy of the mind was weakened. The enthusiasm of the poet was now too precious to be held in check. Thus romantic irony became involved with symbolism.

5. Lucinde

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6. Conclusion

As early as 1798 Schlegel was at

work on a novel. Previous to this he had devoted his time to criticism and philology, with very little inclination for creative art. When "Lucinde" appeared in 1799, its reception was so harsh that he abandoned his idea of writing a second part.

Schlegel had considered "Wilhelm Meister" the highest type of modern art, and he had derived many of his doctrines from it. He felt that a leader should be both creative and critical, and set about writing "Lucinde" in an attempt to exemplify his theory. Goethe often treated the morals of his characters very liberally and at times extremely daringly. Schlegel had his ideas about the proper relations of the sexes and these he attempted to set forth in "Lucinde".

At this time in Germany there was a great laxity in marriage relations. Many felt that the marriage-bond was oppressive, unnatural, and even evil. The burning question of the day was: "What is the true relation?" This Schlegel attempted to answer.

But ironically enough, Schlegel, who advanced the theory that irony must be objective, went over to the enemy's camp. He was,

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perhaps, influenced by Tieck's successes, for his theory of self-mastery failed. He went to excess and his doctrine suffered; for here he became a subjective idealist.

The whole book is in the nature of a personal confession, and as foreign to his nature as this was, he managed to overcome his aversion and reveal his innermost being. Even good taste did not prevent him from exposing his relations with various women.

Schiller expressed his disappointment after reading it, that he had found in it none of that simplicity which Schlegel had so admired in the Greeks.

The real purpose of the book, however, is to identify poetry and life, for that is, of course, the one thing that Schlegel endeavored to do. But it is entirely subjective in that the ego has lost its power of overlordship; and in this book are to be found the theories which are developed later in the history of Romanticism.

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2. Ludwig Tieck

It is in Ludwig Tieck that we find prolific examples of irony, but the irony of Tieck

differs considerably from that of Schlegel.

Irony to Schlegel meant the preservation of complete objectivity on the part of the creator. Just as God cannot be identified with any of his creations, yet is omnipresent, so Shakespeare cannot be identified with his characters, yet he is ever present.

Tieck's irony resembled that of Schlegel to some extent. He (Tieck) did believe that the author should never lose himself in his work; he should have supreme control over himself. He also stressed the element of "Willkür" in the working of the mind. But the difference lay in the fact that Tieck believed that irony required a destruction of objectivity wherever it appeared. That is, the author, to show his superiority, should constantly interrupt his novel or play to insert his personal opinions.

There is also another side to romantic irony than that stressed by Schlegel, and that is its humorous side. Irony and humor are closely allied. There is ever an interplay of "Scherz" and"Ernst". This humorous element is very evident in Tieck. He once remarked that one never really possesses any object which he loves

differs considerably from that of Sodlegel.

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until he can find something in it at which he can laugh; that he can have no friend or beloved if he has never found anything at which to laugh or smile. He considered it charming irony in the Greeks, that they could extol their gods to laughter without harming in any way their olympian majesty.

1. Influence of Cervantes

Tieck as a boy was profoundly interested in Goethe and Shakespeare and when at the Gymnasium in Berlin came upon a translation of Cervantes'"Don Quixote". He was so delighted with this that he pleaded ill so that he could spend an undisturbed afternoon pursuing the adventurous knight.

Later in Göttingen he studied Spanish that he might perfect himself in the language and literature, for he was already planning to translate this novel. His translation was the first adequate German translation. His constant association with "Don Quixote", lasting nearly ten years, exerted considerable influence upon him and his irony was to some extent derived from this.

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I. Influence of Cervantes:

Flaubert as a boy was profoundly interested in Don Quixote and Shakespeare and when at the gymnasium in Berlin came upon a translation of Cervantes' "Don Quixote". He was so delighted with this that he pleaded till so that he could spend an undisturbed afternoon pursuing the adventurous knight.

Later in Königsberg he studied Spanish that he might perfect himself in the language and literature, for he was already planning to translate this novel. His translation was the first adequate German translation. His constant association with "Don Quixote", lasting nearly ten years, exerted considerable influence upon his and his irony was to some extent derived from this.

Flaubert had studied Shakespeare enthusiastically and even considered that he best represented what Schlegel meant by his conception of the

similarity between the literary creator and the creator of the universe. Yet it was not Shakespeare who influenced him. As highly as he respected him, he considered Cervantes on nearly the same plane. Tieck asserted that both Shakespeare and Cervantes used the past as a means for understanding the present and future; and he considered both the culmination of modern poetry.

He maintained that the blending of the prosaic and poetic in "Don Quixote" made it a work of great and lasting artistic value. It was one of the few books in which were combined seriousness and humor, poesie and wit, adventure and retirement.

2. Influence of Sterne

Tieck was also influenced by Lawrence Sterne and credited him with having roused Germany from its spiritual slumber. He praised his humorous treatment of the pain of life, griefs of love, and sorrows of super-sensitiveness far above that of Rabelais. In many of his works he refers to certain aspects of Sterne's works. He comments upon the fact that Sterne was able to aim his shafts of irony not only at others but at himself. In

"Peter Lebrecht"he says:.."dich und die übrigen Menschen auf eine gleiche Art belächelst und bemitleidest".

3. Influence of Goethe

Tieck admired Goethe, but his early works more than his later ones. He criticized the later works from the point of view of the earlier ones, even "Wilhelm Meister", although he did concede that the beginning of this was quite in his "Jugendstil". But he frequently states that he learned to read from "Götz von Berlichingen". Later he stated that Goethe attained the highest in "Götz und Werther".

4. Examples of Irony in Tieck's Works

That Tieck was greatly influenced by Cervantes, Sterne and Goethe there is no denying. There are many similarities in these three which are also exemplified in Tieck.

In "Don Quixote", "Tristram Shandy" and "Wilhelm Meister" there are constant ironical assertions that the author is observing the strict truth. In "Don Quixote" one comes frequently upon such statements as: "This veracious history", "scrupulous exactitude", "great precision".

"Peter Leipzeck" he says: "Glück und die Bürgen Menschen auf eine gleiche Art beliebdelst und beurteilbdert".

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In "Tristram Shandy" the author makes similiar remarks; and in "Wilhelm Meister" Goethe often refers to the fact (ironically) that he is more interested in the exact narration of an historical record than to produce a piece of creative literature. Everything is done in the interest of historical objectivity. But in spite of this professed desire all three are constantly intent upon destroying this objectivity. There are frequent interruptions in the narrative, where the author expresses himself ironically upon the author, reader, hero, and even the popular literature of the day.

Tieck, too, destroys the objectivity of his literary creations by frequent interruptions made by himself as author. And these remarks always have an ironical purpose. He professes to wish to preserve the historical objectivity, whereas he constantly and purposely destroys it by exposing the shortcomings of his creation as compared with his ideal.

He constantly reminds the reader that the ultimate goal is truth and frequently uses the terms "wahr", "wahrhaft", and "Wahrheit". The

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sub-title to "Peter Lebrecht" is "Eine Geschichte ohne Abenteuerlichkeiten" and asserts that the story is told "der Wahrheit nach". The sub-title of "Die sieben Weiber des Blaubart" is "Eine wahre Familiengeschichte".

Tieck likewise destroys his literary objectivity by intentional subjective and personal thrusts at himself as author, at the hero, the reader, and the writings of the day.

Cervantes, Goethe, and Sterne praise their own works extravagantly. "Don Quixote" is"a grave, high-sounding, minute, delightful history", and the reader is not to become too engrossed so that he neglects to notice the elegance and art of the composition. Sterne extols "Tristram Shandy" as a "rhapsodical work", a "book of books" written for the "edification of the world".

Tieck often speaks derogatively of himself as author and poet, particularly in "Peter Lebrecht". "Der Leser will sehen, dass ich Narr bin". He likewise charges himself with being monotonous. He also makes fun of himself by means of mock praise. He refers to himself when he speaks of Peter Lebrecht as the author of

sub-title to "Peter Schlemihl" is "Eine Geschichte ohne Beschwerlichkeiten" and asserts that the story is told "für Kindheit und Jugend". The sub-title of "Die Leiden Werther des Blumenist" is "Eine wahre Familiengeschichte".

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"Ritter Blaubart". He frequently criticizes himself with imperfection of style and incoherence of plot. He breaks off abruptly in his narration to condemn his style.

This form of irony he found in Cervantes, Sterne and Goethe. All three indulged in direct criticism of their work, either in whole or in part.

Then, too, all three often introduced irrelevant episodes and interpolations. "Don Quixote" is interrupted by a ballad, or a long tale. Sterne and Goethe, too, used this device.

Sterne's irony at times takes a peculiar twist. Sometimes he has the pages smeared with printer's ink, or sometimes has wall-paper pasted on the pages. Sometimes pages are left blank, and sometimes even whole chapters, the omission being explained or even introduced in later chapters.

Tieck destroys his objectivity by more or less philosophical reflections, or enumerates reasons for a certain argument into which he has launched, or excuses a long digression by saying that he always loses himself in his thoughts.

Cervantes, Sterne and Goethe frequently reflect the author's irony by destroying the

objectivity of the narrative by referring to it as a mere piece of literary composition. This is done by calling attention to preceeding or succeeding chapters or events, to the work as a book rather than a narrative. In Cervantes are to be found such statements as "the history informs us", "the history relates"; Sterne likewise makes reference to other parts of the book by "I have told you in chapter---" and such; while in Goethe are similiar references. In "Wilhelm Meister" is to be found such an instance, when Goethe, having introduced "Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele",-"die Wirkung, die es (das Manuskript) wirkt, wird der Leser am besten beurteilen können, wenn er sich mit dem folgenden Buche bekannt gemacht hat". In Tieck we find references of "meine Geschichte", "das Stück", "diese Familiengeschichte" and the like.

All three also treated their hero ironically. Cervantes often makes extremely sarcastic remarks when he speaks of "our invincible knight", or "a virtuous and eminent man". Sterne makes little of "Tristram Shandy" with "sport of small accident". Even Goethe speaks of "Wilhelm Meister" as "nature's favorite".

Tieck, too, constantly used irony at the expense of his hero. He refers to Mathias Klostermayer as "unser Held"; to Peter Lebrecht as "unser Hauptheld". He frequently mentions the insignificant character of Peter Lebrecht. Blaubart was also a fine target for ironical utterances. "Ich will jeden Menschen von Gefühl fragen, ob es wohl schon irgend einmal eimen Helden einer Geschichte mit einem blauen Bart gesehen habe". Or he credits him with not having "die edle Kunst des Schreibens und Lesens". Just as did the others, he also mocks other characters, and sometimes these characters make fun of the hero.

In "Die Sieben Weiber des Blaubart", Bernard, the patron fairy, directs the life and fortunes of Blaubart and berates him for the futility and vanity of his career. But Blaubart is an ungrateful creature, for Bernard's efforts to elevate him are of no avail, and Bernard calls him "ein uninteressanter Charakter". Here Bernard, like the author, shapes the course of Blaubart, just as Cervantes asserts in "Don Quixote" that the whole is merely the translation from an old manuscript. This allows both Cervantes and Tieck to step forth and

Flaubert, too, somewhat used irony at the expense of his hero. He refers to Rodolphe Boisdoseyer as "Master Dick"; to Emma Bovary as "Lower Bauchfield". He frequently mentions the insignificant character of Emma's husband. Flaubert was also a fine target for ironical utterances. "Ich will jedem Menschen von tiefem Irrgen, ob er wohl andere Irgend einmal einen Italien einer Gesellschaft mit einem Bierman Bart gesehen habe". Or he credits his wife not having "die edle Kunst der Konversation und Lieben". Just as did the others, he also mocks other characters, and sometimes these characters make fun of the hero.

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speak in person, and likewise an excellent opportunity for ironical utterances.

Cervantes and Sterne often berate the reader. Cervantes addresses him as "the sagacious reader", "Your Worships", "your reverences". Sterne regards his readers as irascible, unjust, forgetful. Like instances can be found in both Tieck and Goethe.

Cervantes, Sterne and Tieck all directed their irony against the popular literature of the day. Hence we can see that all of these men used every device to break down that literary objectivity so desirable to Schlegel. All the faults (if they can be called such) are thrown into bold relief.

Tieck began to exhibit irony in his works of art when working for the publisher Nicolai. At first he wrote precocious stories in which superstition was ridiculed. Then he wrote a series of satirical stories in which fine traces of irony began to appear. Much of this irony was directed toward his readers, in order to show his superiority as an author and also to impress upon the public the low plane to which literature had fallen.

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These readers were, actually, rather dull and stupid. They lacked taste in art and literature and preferred action to delineation of character. They also had a penchant for maudlin love stories. Tieck sensed all this and directed his irony against such faults.

In "Der gestiefelte Kater" and also "Die verkehrte Welt" there are allusions to the demands of the rationalistic spectator that they be shown what is natural and reasonable. There is also reference to the demand for moralizing.

Tieck was disgusted with the apparent lack of taste and discrimination of the reading public and often uttered disparaging remarks about it. In one part of "Peter Lebrecht" he states that the second part will have little to do with the first, and that the reader need have little consternation, if he has completely forgotten the first part.

Tieck often admonishes the readers to choose between the good old chap books, and the cheap reading material of the day. He took many an opportunity to ridicule the popular writers but considered the reader responsible to a large extent.

In fact, there was very little at which Tieck did not aim the shafts of his irony.

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Tieck used irony as an end, whereas Schlegel used it as a means. His was a capricious irony and it was ever present in his works. It might almost be called the irony of irony, for it destroyed all that Schlegel wanted to preserve.

Tieck frequently uses the expediency of a play within a play, merely to mock the accepted conception of the drama. The audience is seated upon the stage and criticize or extol the performance at will, or even comment upon the author. In "Der gestiefelte Kater" the "audience" is discussing the forthcoming production, when the poet steps out on the stage.

"Dichter:	Das Stück wird sogleich seinen Anfang nehmen.
Müller:	Kein Stück,--wir wollen kein Stück,--wir wollen guten Geschmack.
Alle:	Geschmack! Geschmack!
Dichter:	Ich bin in Verlegenheit,--was meinen Sie, wenn ich fragen darf?
Schlosser:	Geschmack!--Sind Sie ein Dichter, und wissen nicht einmal, was Geschmack ist?
Dichter:	Bedenken Sie, einen jungen Anfänger--
Schlosser:	Wir wollen nichts von Anfänger wissen, --wir wollen ein ordentliches Stück.
Dichter:	Von welcher Sorte? Von welcher Farbe?
Müller:	Familiengeschichten.
Leutner:	Lebensrettung.
Fischer:	Sittlichkeit und deutsche Gesinnung.
Schlosser:	Religiös erhebende, wohlthuende geheime Gesellschaften.
Wiesener:	Hussiten und Kinder!
Nachbar:	Recht so, und Kirschen dazu, und Viertelsmeister!" 1

1) Vol. V, p. 171

Later the king is speaking with Nathanael, who has come from a distant country. Suddenly he breaks off in his conversation and asks him, how it is that he can speak the language so fluently.

"König: ---Aber noch eins, sagen Sie mir nur, da Sie so weit weg wohnen, wie Sie unsre Sprache so geläufig sprechen können?
Nathanael: Still!
König: Wie!
Nathanael: Still! Still!
König: Ich verstehe nicht.
Nathanael: Sein Sie doch ja damit ruhig, denn sonst merkt es ja am Ende das Publikum da unten, dass das eben sehr unnatürlich ist.
König: Schadet nicht, es hat vorher geklatscht, und da kann ihm schon etwas bieten.
Nathanael: Sehen Sie, es geschieht ja bloss dem Drama zu Gefallen, dass ich ihre Sprache rede, denn sonst ist es allerdings unbegreiflich." 1

The audience again criticizes.

"Fischer: Verfluchte Unnatürlichkeiten sind da in dem Stück!
Schlosser: Und der König bleibt seinem Charakter gar nicht getreu.
Leutner: Am meisten erbossen mich immer Widersprüche und Unnatürlichkeiten. Warum kann denn nur der Prinz nicht ein Bischen eine Fremde Sprache reden, die sein Dolmetscher verdeutschte? Sprachfehler, die sie selber gesteht, dass sie unrichtig schreibt?
Müller: Freilich! Freilich! --das Ganze ist ausgemacht dummes Zeug; der Dichter vergisst immer selber, was er den Augenblick vorher gesagt hat." 2

1) Vol. V, p. 194
2) Vol. V, p. 195

The following bit of criticism is aimed at Iffland and Kotzebue, who advocated realism in art. Is not Tieck "ironizing" those of royal birth in this instance? The king and princess are riding through the land. They stop before a man who is threshing grain.

"Prinzessin: ---Aber was man doch auf Reisen Neues sieht. Sagt mir doch einmal, guter Bauer, warum haut Ihr denn das Stroh so um?

Kunz: Das ist ja die Ernte, Mamsell Königin, das Getraide.

König: Das Getraide?---Wozu braucht Ihr denn das?

Kunz: Daraus wird ja das Brod gebacken.

König: Bitt' ich Dich um Himmelswillen, Tochter!---Wer sollte auf solche Streiche kommen?---Die Natur ist doch etwas wunderbares!----------

Kunz: Kennt kein Getraide! Alle Tage erfährt man doch mehr Neues.----- Wenn er mir nicht blankes Goldstück gegeben hätte, und wenn er kein König wäre, so sollte man denken, er wäre ein ganz einfältiger Mensch.-------". 1

The players themselves even comment upon the play. The scholar and fool are disputing in the palace before the throne, when the scholar says:

"Das Thema meiner Behauptung ist, dass ein neuerlich erschienenes Stück: der gestiefielte Kater, ein gutes Stück sei." 2

1) Vol. V, p. 261
2) Vol. V, p. 251

An even worse state of affairs is to be found in "Die verkehrte Welt", for here there is not a play within a play, but another play within the second play. Here, too, the actors comment on the play itself. Skaramuz is riding through the forest when a thunder-storm comes up.

"Skaramuz: Wo, Henker, kommt das Gewitter her? davon steht ja kein einziges Wort in meiner Rolle. Was sind das für Dummheiten! Und ich und mein Esel werden darüber pudelnass. Ei, das steht mir gar nicht an.--- Maschinist! Maschinist! so hält er doch ins Teufels Namen inne'.---- (Es donnert und blitzt.) Höre mich Schlingel von einem Maschinisten!. Wie kannst Du Dich unterstehen, Donner und Blitzt so zu verschwenden? Das sollst Du mir gewiss theuer bezahlen. -----Ich sage, halt mit dem Donnern inne.

Maschinist: Herr Skaramuz, ich kann nicht dafür, denn es muss sein.

Skaramuz: Muss sein? Ich sage aber, es muss durchaus nicht sein! Wer hat hier zu befehlen?

Maschinist: Das Publicum hat so gewollt.

Skaramuz: Ist das wahr, meine Herren?

Zuschauer: Ja, wir haben es ihm so befohlen.

Skaramuz: Aber, meine Herren, ich werde nass." 1

And so it goes on. The audience will not change their minds, so it thunders again and the machinist explains how he produces the thunder and lightning.

1) Vol. V, p. 315

To add further to the confusion "Die verkehrte Welt" begins with the epilogue and ends with the prologue.

In fact, most of his comedies are dramatized fairy-tales to criticize the literary follies of the times.

Thus we can see that there is an essential difference in the type of irony exemplified by Schlegel and that exemplified by Tieck.

The irony of Schlegel depends upon the preservation of literary objectivity, and Shakespeare is actually the only writer who manages to preserve this objectivity. Schlegel based his theory largely upon the practise of Shakespeare.

Tieck on the other hand considered it necessary to destroy literary objectivity. And strange to say, it is the irony of Tieck and Goethe, and not that of Schlegel, which is considered the true representative of the Romantic period. This type of irony exemplified also by Sterne and Cervantes, depends upon the ridicule of the works, readers, literary contemporaries of the authors, and even upon the authors for its effect. And in so doing literary objectivity is sacrificed for literary subjectivity.

Schlegel had considered it necessary that the work of art, despite its objectivity, should reveal the subjective qualities of the artist. Just as the works of God reveal his power and glory, so should those of the artist. Yet in spite of the fact that Schlegel introduced this term into literature, his theory of self-restraint failed to work in "Lucinde". Instead of Tieck being influenced by Schlegel, Schlegel was undoubtedly influenced by Tieck's successes--for in it is to be found the destructive irony found in Tieck.

C. Other writers

It is from the later writers of the Romantic period, for the most part, that current notions of irony are drawn. This use of irony is somewhat modified from that expounded by Schlegel, but is inspired by Tieck's. In some occasions it is a very much distorted irony.

These later writers were, however, more productive than the Berlin-Jena writers. Mr. A. W. Porterfield in "An Outline of German Romanticism" says that the Romanticism of the Berlin group was critical, philosophical, foreign, unpopular, abounded in irony, was cosmopolitan, unlyrical and

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Mr. A. W. Porterfield in "An outline of German Romanticism" says that the characteristics of the Jenian irony was critical, philosophical, formless, unpopular, succeeded in irony, was cosmopolitan, mystical and

speculative; while that of the others was creative, poetic, Germanic, popular, humane, lyrical, readable and richer in content. Except for Tieck, very little of the literature of the older writers is readable today. [1]

There are examples of irony to be found in many of these writers, but it would be impossible to treat them all in detail. It will serve our purpose to consider those in whom the best examples are to be found.

1. Ludwig Joachim von Arnim (Achim von Arnim)

It is impossible to consider Arnim without Brentano, for these men were closely allied during their lives; they collaborated in publishing a collection of songs under the title "Des Knaben Wunderhorn", and Arnim married Bettina, Brentano's sister.

Arnim is one of the truly noble men of this period. He was not understood by most, probably because he was the one normal writer in the group.

He endeavored to reveal to the German people the beauty of the childlike and simple.

1) p. 56

In his writings he is always serious, even in his wildest flights. But like Sterne and Tieck, he often digresses from his subject and injects tales which have little or no relation to the plot.

In "Gräfin Dolores", which is modelled after "Wilhelm Meister", he sharply castigates the anti-Romanticist, Jens Baggesen, who had written a series of satirical sonnets directed against the Romanticists. He caricatures him pitilessly and wittily in the character of "Waller". But "Gräfin Dolores" has also a general application in that it declaims against the lawlessness and levity of the emotional life of the generation. "Fürst Ganzgott und Sänger Halbgott", is in part a traversty on the stiff and burdensome conventions of the small courts; while "Halle und Jerusalem" attacks the Romanticists whose piety is not sincere.

2. Clemens Maria Brentano

Brentano wrote for his own satisfaction and gave free rein to his vivid imagination, but he was unstable and unreliable. His talent was sparkling and supple, and he himself was an intellectual prodigy, but he is interesting as a psychological phenomenon, not as a man.

The conflict between his prosaic business life and the inner life of the imagination left its imprint on him. He created a fabulous world partly out of his own experience and partly from his imagination. He lied unscrupulously in his conversation and letters to produce a comic effect.

In his younger days he was the jester of Romanticism. He was popular because of his powers of conversation, whimsicality and rocket-like sallies of wit, but could not refrain from doing what he knew would cost him his friends; that is, he delights in destroying the emotions and illusions he has created by a jest, and often mocks at his own emotion. He even ended a solemn hymn with the confession: "Know that I'm hungry".

He might be compared to the god Kronos, ironical and sportive, who demolishes all his utterances by means of its successor. And of all the Romanticists, he was the only one fully aware that he had no aim.

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he satirizes the first part and the characters in it. Godwi, the hero of the first part, retires into the background in the second, while the author, under an assumed name, takes his place and brings Godwi the first part to read.

3. Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffmann

Hoffmann carries to the extreme the mixture of the real and the imaginary. He follows in the steps of Cervantes, von Arnim, Chamisso and Tieck. Like Tieck and Brentano he attacks Philistinism, which he represents as a creature of darkness, while the ghosts of Romanticism embody the true and natural life. Science is also a work of the Philistines in that the way the professor speaks about nature offends all the tenderest feelings.

Just as is found in Sterne and Tieck, Hoffmann often lacks clearly-defined form. He very often mixes the different parts of his book so that a part of one story is on one side of a leaf and an entirely different one on the other.

Inspired by "Peter Schlemihl" he wrote the "Fantasiestück" or "Story of the Lost Reflection" which is a mixture of sorcery and irony.

Here instead of losing his shadow the hero leaves his reflection in Italy with his beloved.

His works show a wealth of imagination, force of conception and faculty of presentation, but also a morbid and fantastic spirit, which tends to diminish their value. Not all of his works are infected with a vicious element, yet the characteristic writings are those wild fictions of impossible beings and impossible transactions, tales of "diablerie".

4. Graf August von Platen

Platen declared that poetry was the counterpart of discordant reality. He had no sympathy with human existance as it was and attacked Napoleon, Russia, the Jesuits, the Illuminati, the taste of the previous century, and even Romanticism.

His satirical comedies are much in the same vein as the Aristophanic comedies. "Die verhängnissevolle Gabel" ridicules fate tragedies in general and Grillparzer's "Ahnfrau" in particular. "Der romantische Orpheus" is directed against the imitations of Shakespeare, which were so common and particularly against Immermann. This last is full of effective satire and brilliant wit. It has the

true power of invective and is righteously indignant at the literary shams. But it in turn has been criticized for giving, not a picture of the world, but a picture of a picture of the world.

5. Jean Paul Richter

Jean Paul is really one of the precursors of the Romantic school and is, therefore, out of place here. Yet we may consider him from the point of view of irony, for he is truly an exponent of irony. He was greatly attracted by Sterne's "Tristram Shandy"; he was incited to imitate his want of form, his witty and fascinating reflections, and his mixture of the serious and comic. Under this influence he wrote many of his works which are full of the satirical, the idyllic, and the elegiac. He also declaimed against German provincialism in burlesque satire.

Jean Paul had a great gift of humor, but it cannot be detached, it is so interwoven in his works, which are also full of grotesque surprises, are whimsical, often absurd, but never coarse or cruel; he runs from one extreme of feeling to another; incongruous subjects are jostled together, and he abounds in digressions. The main thread of the story is constantly lost in irrelevant episodes.

In such figures as Wuz, Quintus Fixlein and others, German life, domestic and civil, is pictured with all its charm, foibles, innocence and absurdity, awkwardness and originality, pedantry and freedom. Its idealism is frequently a caricature of idealism. Wuz, who has no money to buy books, acquires a "library" by collecting titles of books, and then writes the stories in his own brain.

We find in Paul's works, after the manner of Sterne, such phrases as "my fair readers", "my esteemed Friends", "worthy friends", and a reference to the hero in "Quintus Fixlein" as "our Hukelum voyager". In "Quintus Fixlein" there is also a reference to "Tristram Shandy", in which the author speaks of Shandy, Walter Shandy and Lavater.

Jean Paul had great depth of feeling and universality of view; a deep insight into life characterizes him as a genre-painter and humorist. Yet--he did not fully exercise irony as understood by Schlegel, as he put down <u>everything</u> his fancy suggested.

6. Heinrich Heine

Probably no other writer in German literature characterizes more fully the true spirit

of irony than Heine. Not only his writings, but even his life is full of irony.

Heine understood what was effective and left no stone unturned to produce this effect. Like Brentano,the conflict between business life and the inner life of the imagination (the finite and infinite) left its stamp on him. Like Brentano he found lying a favorite and infallible method of conducting public controversy.

The first book he read with interest was "Don Quixote", This had a great influence upon him, and undoubtedly directed his genius and inspired the comic-tragic tone which characterizes all his writings. In the "Reisebilder" he even compares himself to "Don Quixote".

He was in close touch with the "Zeitgeist"---restless, questioning and dissatisfied. Politics, religion, history and philosophy were constantly targets for his attacks. He violently declaimed against contemporary anti-Semitism and against the inroads of Judaism into German culture.

He loved to destroy by a jest

the sentimental mood he created and even mocks his own imagination. He often interrupts his expression of intense emotion by some grotesque suggestion which makes the emotion ridiculous.

In the "Seegespenst" he is leaning over the side of the boat dreaming of a city, and abruptly finishes the poem with the following:

"Aber zur rechten Zeit noch
Ergriff mich beim Fuss der Capitän,
Und zog mich vom Schiffsrand,
Und rief ärgerlich lachend:
Doctor, sind Sie des Teufels?" 1

The "Reisebilder" was modelled after such books as Sterne's "Sentimental Journey". It contains pictures of travel, descriptions of places, peoples and the like, but is also full of criticisms, biographical reminiscences, personalities and satires. With arrogant scorn he ridicules the religious ideas of the times. It opens with a satire on student life at Göttingen and then ridicules heavy German erudition by a dissertation on the feet of the ladies of Göttingen. He repeatedly mocks Göttingen pedantry.

Like Sterne he often leaves whole chapters blank. Chapter twelve speaks for itself:

1) Vol. XV, p. 329

"Die deutschen Censoren .....
.....
.....
.....
.....Dummköpfe.....
.....
....." 1

He also speaks of irony. In a café in Munich he met a native of Berlin who was indignant that Munich and not Berlin should be called "Modern Athens". He speaks about the lack of irony in the people of Munich,--a sign of intellectual attainment to him, a synonym for Attic salt! He complains that they have good white beer but no irony. The maid, not understanding what was meant, says they have no irony but plenty of other kinds of beer. Heine explains to her then, that irony is not beer but something invented by the people of Berlin.

In "Das Buch Le Grand" he is denouncing England for her treatment of Napoleon and interposes:

> "Seltsam! die drei grössten Widersacher des Kaisers hat schon ein schreckliches Schicksal getroffen: Londonderry hat sich die Kehle abgeschnitten, Ludwig XVIII. ist auf seinem Throne verfault, und Professor Saalfeld ist noch immer Professor in Göttingen".

1) Vol. I, p. 269
2) Vol. I, p. 255

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The "Englische Fragmente" is full of criticisms of English institutions and politics, and he also attacks Wellington, who had conquered his idol, Napoleon:

> "Der Mann hat das Unglück überall Glück zu haben, wo die grössten Männer der Welt Unglück hatten, und das empört uns und macht ihn verhasst. Wir sehen in ihm nur den Sieg der Dummheit über das Genie------ Arthur Wellington triumphirt, wo Napoleon Bonaparte untergeht! Nie ward ein Mann ironischer von Fortuna begünstigt, und es ist als ob sie seine öde Winzigkeit zur Schau geben wollte, indem sie ihn auf das Schild des Sieges emporhebt. Fortuna ist ein Weib, und nach Weiberart grollt sie vielleicht heimlich dem Manne, der ihren ehemaligen Liebling stürzte, obgleich dessen Sturz ihr eigner Wille war." 1

His "Atta Troll" and "Romanzero" gave what the Romanticists could never give, the ideal romantic poem. "Atta Troll" burlesques the conception entertained by pious hearts of Heaven with unshrinking Mephistophelean daring.

Although born in Germany he lived many years as an exile in France, because his writings were so hostile to the government. In France he plunged into journalism and politics and wrote much on German topics for French readers, never failing to take advantage of a chance to

1) Vol. III, p. 135

ridicule the land of his birth. Even his book on the Romantic School was written to suit the French taste, and partly to vindicate French classicism, and in it he often deals harshly with many of the great names. Despite the fact that he was an outlaw he managed to keep himself before the German eye.

He visited Germany in 1843 and described his visit in "Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen", in which he expresses more strongly than ever his contempt for Germany and his hatred for Christianity, which he had already embraced. Kuno Franke, in the "History of German Literature", takes exception to this. He is of the opinion that the attack, which was made against the political reaction in Prussia, has been misconstrued into a malicious attack upon the land of his birth.

Heine is one of the most fruitful lyric writers, and had the power of blending elegy with jest and satire. But his brilliant wit is often distorted by his cynicism. He often exposes himself as an inharmonious, fickle and scoffing being. He is, to be sure, variously gifted, but his wit is that born of cynicism, of

the French type (Voltaire); cynicism born of contempt, not always playful, but sometimes like lightning. He seemed to look on life as a colossal farce.

He may also be compared with Sterne and Byron, although he is more akin to Swift in both genius and character. Both men sought advancement in questionable ways, and both were doomed to disappointment; for both there was a disease at the end that was worse than death; both poured gall and wormwood on their adversaries and with whips of scorpions smote folly and vice; both libelled useful and honorable men with coarse lampoons and both too often descended into indecency.

In spite of all this it must be admitted that Heine was a marvellous lyric poet and Germany's wittiest writer, the foremost satirist of his time.

V. SUMMARY

There have been, as can be seen, various types of irony. First, that as exemplified by the Greeks, which had a prophetic quality. The speaker was unaware of any irony, but the spectator recognized its double (and also sinister) meaning, and waited breathlessly for the inevitable catastrophe. Greek drama is by its very nature ironical, and this is the radical difference between ancient and modern drama.

Irony in Romantic literature is two-fold, although its aim is identical. The aim is primarily to exalt the literary creator. But the means which each group used to arrive at this end were entirely different. Each was intended to reveal the omnipotence of the author. Schlegel's was a subtle and profound irony and is to be found in Shakespeare only. He arrived at his theory by his study of Greek poetry, Fichte's doctrine, Goethe, and finally Shakespeare. He demanded that the author should stand apart from his work; that he should be truly inspired, yet, at the same time, be able to restrain his enthusiasm. Ironically enough, when he came to write "Lucinde" his own theory was of no avail.

V. SUMMARY

There have been, as can be seen, various types of irony. Plato, that as exemplified by the dialog, which had a dramatic quality. The speaker was unaware of any irony, but the spectator recognized the double (and also shifter) meaning, and smiled knowingly for the inevitable consequence. Dramatic irony is by the very nature ironical, and this is the verbal difference between ancient and modern drama.

Dramatic Literature is two-fold, although its aim is identical. The aim is primarily to excite the literary creator. But the means which each group used to arrive at this end were entirely different. Each was intended to reveal the characteres of the author. Schlegel's was a subtle and refined irony and is to be found in Shakespeare only. He arrives at his theory by his study of Greek poetry, Plato's Dialogue, Dante, and Italian Romances. He demanded that the author should stand apart from his work; that he should be truly impartial, yet, at the same time, so able to reveal his personality. Ironically enough, he came to write "Lucinde" his own theory was of no avail.

The other type of Romantic irony is that which is found in Spain in Cervantes, in England in Sterne, Smollett and Fielding, in Germany in Goethe and Tieck, and the later Romanticists, Heine, Hoffmann, Brentano, and von Arnim. Oddly enough, despite the fact that this form of irony is not that defined by Schlegel it is what is generally meant when one speaks of Romantic Irony.

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